MODERN REVIEW

VOLUME II, NUMBER 5-6 JUNE, 1948

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Modern Review, a monthly, is published by the American Labor Conference on International Affairs at 7 East 15th Street, New York 3, N .Y. Subscription: $3.50 a year; single copy, 60¢. Canada and other foreign countries, $4.50 a year; single copies, 75¢. All payments from foreign countries must be made by U. S. money orders or by checks payable in U. S. currency or 75¢ added for collection charges. Manuscripts are invited. They should be accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope. Signed contributions do not necessarily represent the policy of *Modern Review*. Copyright, 1948, by the American Labor Conference on International Affairs. Application for entry as second-class matter is pending.

COMMENT

The Fateful Spring

In contrast to previous practice, the Soviet offensive this Spring provoked immediate and resolute reaction by the Western powers. Not only did the demise of Czechoslovakia and the "suicide" of Jan Masaryk have world-wide repercussions and produce a response unprecedented in magnitude and bluntness, down to the Security Council's discussion of Moscow's role in the upheaval, but the "Berlin offensive" too elicited an unequivocal warning that the forcible ouster of the Allies from Berlin would be tantamount to a *casus belli*. Public opinion in the United States, aroused by the reality and brutality of Soviet aggression, has compelled the legislators and the Administration to cast overboard whatever doubts and hesitations were still harbored; it has forced into silence the last vestiges of isolationism. In rapid-fire order the United States has passed to the practical execution of an ambitious program of economic reconstruction in Europe as the only possible foundation for the political and military consolidation of Eurpe under American leadership. The Marshall Plan, exacting astronomic appropriations from the U. S. Treasury and arousing ferocious opposition in the most diverse quarters, was finally rushed through both houses of Congress and translated into actuality. Europe responded with the conference of the sixteen ERP nations in Paris. The absence of "strings" in the ERP bill—qualifications which many Europeans feared were capable of jeopardizing the national sovereignty of the participating states—lays the basis for sincere and fruitful cooperation, a cooperation which is bound to facilitate considerably the process of recovery that is essential for the economic consolidation of the non-Soviet segment of the European continent.

At the same time, the success of the Marshall Plan, and the disturbing news of Soviet activity in connection with the Italain elections and the "battle for Berlin," also hastened the process of military coalescence. On March 1, the British House of Commons approved the creation of a "Western Union" with the military support of the United States. A few days later, the representatives of England, France,

Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxemburg discussed and adopted in principle the project for an economic, cultural, political and military unification of Western Europe with American assistance. These same nations, together with the United States, agreed to the inclusion of Western Germany in the ERP and to the international organization of Ruhr industry. Several weeks later, the American Congress voted giant appropriations for an armament program, including the increase of the air forces to seventy groups, far above the level demanded by the Administration.

The circuit is closed. To the Soviet challenge the United States—and with it, the nations of Western Europe—has responded with a counter-challenge. The race for politico-economic coagulation and re-armament, which has been under way behind the Iron Curtain for a considerable time, has now been extended to the other side. If two or three years ago every European country, from England and France down to tiny Luxemburg, sought to offer its services as a "bridge" between East and West, there are today no volunteers for that "mission": relations between East and West have polarized.

The contour and context of the future magnetic field is already clearly discernible. But another fact has become evident as well: given several years of undisturbed preparations, the United States and its allies in Europe will possess facilities and resources far superior to those of the Soviet sphere, especially if they make use of the industrial potential of Western Germany and the Ruhr valley. If, on the other hand, we compare the combat readiness of the two blocs at any moment in the near future, the ratio of forces is markedly different. Soviet Russia in effect never abandoned nor suspended her preparations for war. Even during the last war, the Stalin regime was already concerned with the possibly looming conflict with its allies. This was well illustrated, for example, in the seizure of three American B-29's forced down in Russia, which are now being mass produced by Soviet war plants for future use against the United States. The Red Army was never placed on a peacetime footing; the demobilization of the older classes merely increased its relative fighting capacity. The USSR has disarmed neither psychologically, nor economically, nor technically. At the same time the Soviet Government has taken all necessary measures to assure the fastest possible creation and standardization of armed forces in the satellite states. Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Rumania, Poland, Albania and

now Hungary and Czechoslovakia, possess comparatively large and well-equipped armies which represent a sizable fighting contingent in the Europe of today. These are for all practical purposes organic parts of the Red Army.

On the other hand, we know only too well with what haste the demobilization of American armed forces was effected, and under what tremendous pressure the fighting strength of Great Britain was virtually shattered in the aftermath of war. France, Belgium, and Holland have still not been able to reconstruct their military establishments, while Italy is prohibited from rearming by the provisions of the peace treaty adopted at the behest of the Soviets and Yugoslavs.

Thus, in terms of the basic strategic criterion—which of the two camps could best be prepared to give battle anywhere on the European mainland—there can be no doubt whatever that the Soviet bloc with its inner lines of communications, with the huge resources of the USSR marshalled for any military emergency, ready and vigilant in full battle array, by far exceeds the combat readiness of the Western bloc which must rely upon the forces of the distant United States.

Is it not natural then under the circumstances that Stalin, whose urge for the realization of world-wide Communism is second only to his contempt for "sentimentality" and moral inhibitions, should seek to take advantage of the "scissors" between his present superiority and his future inferiority in the potential of power politics in order to freeze the privilege position he now holds and to espouse the Faustian incantation: "Hold on, O moment, you are too beautiful!"

All military experts agree that in case of war all of continental Europe would be in Stalin's hands within a few weeks and that in this manner the forces of Western coalition would be considerably reduced in territory, man power, and industrial capacity. Why then does Stalin hesitate?

Early in April it appeared that Stalin had decided precisely upon such an aggressive course. In the Soviet zone of Germany stood a huge army ready for action. Tito's forces were at the gates of Italy. The Italian Communists, two million strong, with a million followers of Pietro Nenni and millions of trade union members, were feverishly preparing to take advantage of the elections—whatever its outcome—to unleash a civil war that would be a prelude to Yugoslav, and, if need be, Soviet intervention. Secretary Marshall frankly stated that the sit-

uation was "very serious." In London well-informed persons were predicting war within weeks.

About two weeks before the elections, however, Moscow retreated. Tito was instructed to hold back; the Italian Communists dissolved their alerted detachments and declared their readiness to abide by law; the Soviet army in Germany seemingly evaporated and the "battle for Berlin" ceased.

It remains a matter of speculation why Stalin hurriedly called off the impending offensive last April. Some sources asserted that the reason for the change of orders lay in the latest atomic experiments which had evidently demonstrated the existence of atomic weapons far superior in destructive power to anything known previously. Let us suppose that Stalin received reliable information about the Eniwetok tests; let us further suppose that Washington was sufficiently astute to place a detailed and authoritative account into hands that would unerringly pass it on to Stalin. Let us finally suppose that Stalin and his experts carefully studied the report and judged it authentic. It would then be natural for a level-headed and shrewd calculator like Stalin to promptly postpone any operation that might unleash a chain of events fatal to the Soviet regime.

Who can state whether this hypothesis is or is not true? If it is, the third World War was forestalled through the perfection of the atomic bomb, and Eniwetok has saved humanity from a new catastrophe. The peace of the world rests on the atomic pile. This statement runs counter to all traditional notions of human progress. But it adequately reflects the reality of international relations in the era of totalitarian dictatorships.

And the very nature of such dictatorships and their leaders further explains the latest events in the international political arena. It would be fully in keeping with the methods and resourcefulness of Stalin's government to endeavor above all to *gain time*.

The logical consequence of this line of reasoning was the well-publicized "peace offensive." It matters little whether or not Ambassador Smith's note of May 4 was appropriate: it merely provided Stalin with a useful vehicle for the initiation of his maneuver. Had there been no such note, Moscow would have found some other instrument, and his faithful partner in the "peace racket," Mr. Henry Wallace, would still have supplied him with the convenient letter. Today Stalin

deems it essential to play for time—time to perfect his own lethal weapons, his own atomic bomb.

However probable this entire account, no one can vouch for its correctness. It may also be that the objectives of the Soviet peace offensive are strictly limited indeed. It may be that the fateful Spring will be followed by a no less fatal Fall—for did not three great European wars break out, once the harvest was in, in August or September?

What matters it if Stalin's maneuver is so naive and transparent as to fool none but the most gullible? In the pursuit of an ardent wish, the most intelligent become childishly credulous. The wish is father to the thought: humanity desires nothing so intensely as peace and security. Stalin knows it and banks on it.

The power of Stalinism is not merely the political and military might that radiates from its world center in Moscow. It thrives on frustrated hopes, expectations and aspirations that have roots deep in modern man, in the living conditions of the masses, in the inherent contradictions of contemporary society, in every social plight which Communist propaganda so ably exploits for its own ends. Like no other movement, Stalinism is capable of arousing hopes and illusions, of creating legends and myths—without being able to satisfy these expectations when it comes to power.

Democracy, *and especially social democracy,* can successfully dispel these illusions and shatter these myths only by accepting the challenge and countering with its own real and tangible accomplishments. Stalin will gain time, to be sure; but so will European socialism and liberalism. If Stalin needs time to produce atomic bombs, European labor and liberalism need time to implement those economic, social, and political reforms which will raise standards of living for the European masses and at the same time deprive Stalinism of its popular base in those countries where it still counts numerous adherents.

History has given European democracy a new and perhaps last lease on life in our time. It has endowed it with both a precious opportunity and a supreme responsibility. But democracy would be committing suicide if it forgot for a single instant the peace-keeping quality of uranium. It will be doomed if it lets itself be governed by the temptation to slow down the tempo of preparedness—a development which alone is able to arrest Stalin's sword which hovers over the heads of mankind.

WHITEHEAD AND THE REVOLT AGAINST METAPHYSICS

Paul Kecskemeti

Looking back upon the development of Western philosophy during the last two hundred and fifty years, it may be said that the modern mind came into its own with the empiricist "revolt against metaphysics," associated with the names of Locke and Hume.

In what did this "revolt" consist? Above all, I think, it introduced a new conception of the essence and aim of knowledge. Metaphysical philosophy proceeded from the general to the particular. It sought to attain self-evident knowledge that could be applied to every existing item in the universe, in so far as it was real. Since sense experience was not of such a comprehensive nature, metaphyiscal philosophy waved it aside as irrelevant to the task of philosophy. Knowledge derived from the senses was, at best, fragmentary and second-rate.

Empiricism, on the other hand, reversed this hierarchy. It proclaimed knowledge based upon sense experience as the only source of genuine and indubitable knowledge man could have about his world. As for knowledge about the "whole," it could gradually be built up from scattered pieces of particular knowledge, but not the other way around.

The evolution of natural science during the last two centuries testifies to the fruitfulness of the empiricist approach. To be sure, certain elements inherited from metaphysics have passed into science, and science could not exist without them; but empiricism has been responsible for the fundamental attitude of the scientist. The great lesson of empiricism has been that individual facts as such are relevant to the highest type of knowledge, that they cannot be waved aside and left in abeyance while a knowledge of the whole as such is being perfected.

Modern man has discarded the fundamental conviction of the

metaphysician that knowledge is the more "real," the more universal its scope. Not that universality of scope is rejected altogether, or that knowledge is reduced to disjointed bits of experience. The modern empiricist conception of knowledge is not of such an extreme character. But the modern empiricist mind admits only universalities of a qualified and limited kind, such as natural laws, and rejects concepts of unlimited universality, unless they are analytical. It is undeniable that these modern habits of thought save philosophy from many pitfalls and blind alleys. And yet: it cannot be said that no unsolved philosophical problems remain if we discard the metaphysical approach and adopt empiricism.

Originally, the empiricist position, as defined by Locke, recognized at least three types of entities so different in kind that it was impossible to understand how they could form one reality; these are the experiences a subject had, the subject or "I" which had these experiences and reasoned about them, and the objects in the "outside world" to which the conclusions drawn from the experiences were supposed to apply. Later empiricists, however, recognized that the division of the whole of reality into three separate zones was inconsistent with the spirit of empiricism which called for the concept of *homogeneous* knowledge about a *homogeneous* world. Since Hume, empiricist philosophers accordingly granted full status of reality to only one of the types of entity revealed by Locke's analysis of experience. Hume and his followers identified reality with the various experiences themselves, dissociated from any subject or "I" and any outside world. The positivists tended to recognize only the experiencing subject or "I" as real, claiming that neither the experiences as such nor the objects as such amount to anything if conceived as being separate from the subject. Finally, to the materialists, the various objects making up the outside world are alone real; minds and their experiences are only a sub-class of material phenomena, to be interpreted and studied on the same footing as all the others.

All three positions, however, suffer from great difficulties. It is as hard to believe in a reality made up of disembodied "experiences" as in a subject encompassing all reality, and in a material phenomenon studying and understanding itself. It seems somehow that empiricist philosophy, at least in its traditional forms, does not succeed in evolving a satisfactory world picture.

Various attempts were made by recent philosophical schools to overcome the defects of traditional empiricist doctrines. Some philosophers tried to undo the revolt against metaphysics and reinstate "substance" as the ultimate object of knowledge, instead of direct experience. Others sought to develop one or the other branch of empiricism so as to eliminate those fundamental concepts which caused difficulties. One of the most intriguing questions facing philosophy today is whether empiricism can put its house in order, or whether a return to some metaphysical type of philosophy will have to be attempted.

I

One might be tempted to assume, when reading the more recent books of Alfred North Whitehead, the great philosopher who passed away last December, that he was primarily interested in reviving metaphysics in defiance of the general empiricist trend of modern thought. And it is true that in these works, especially in *Process and Reality* (1929) which contains the fullest statement of his metaphysical position, he talks little about objects of ordinary experience, either at the pre-scientific everyday level, or at the scientific level. *Process and Reality* deals with so-called "actual entities" or "actual occasions," with "eternal objects," with their various "nexus" and "ingressions"—that is, with things whose existence the philosopher may well assume in order to account for certain features of the world or of reality as a whole, but which he cannot point out and exhibit for inspection. We shall attempt later to give some idea of what Whitehead means by these strange terms; at this point, it is sufficient to say that they stand for elements and features of ultimate reality which philosophical reasoning may uncover "behind" the surface of immediate experience. That Whitehead tried, by reasoning, to find ultimately real entities not given in ordinary sense experience sufficiently shows the metaphysical nature of his attitude as a philosopher.

Moreover, in *Process and Reality,* there is a great deal of direct criticism of Locke, Hume and Kant—the leading philosophers of the "revolt against metaphysics." Whitehead roundly rejects "sensationalism," *i.e.,* the doctrine that nothing but sensations are immediately "given"; he also rejects the Kantian solution of the problem of experience. Can we say, then, that Whitehead's ultimate intention is the undoing of the "revolt against metaphysics?"

That Whitehead's thinking *was* metaphysical is not in doubt. What interests us here, however, is his ultimate purpose as a thinker rather than individual features of his thinking. And it seems to me that Whitehead adopted metaphysical methods, not in order to undo the empiricist revolution and to revive a metaphysics of "substance," but in order to put the philosophy of immediate experience upon a broader basis than that afforded by traditional empiricism. Whitehead's method is metaphysical, but the general drift of his thought is "empiricist," if we understand by this term a type of thinking which places the concrete above the abstract, the particular above the universal, the individual above the general.

In discussing earlier philosophies, Whitehead criticizes European metaphysics of the time just before the "revolt" no less incisively than he does the empiricist doctrines of the period after the "revolt." In fact, in one respect, which to him is crucial, he sees no difference between Descartes and Hume: both share a defect common to "all modern philosophy." This defect consists in the fact that modern philosophers insist on giving a full account of the world in terms of "subject and predicate, substance and quality, particular and universal." And Whitehead adds: "The result always does violence to that immediate experience which we express in our actions, our hopes, our sympathies, our purposes. . . ."

What Whitehead says here is that mere descriptive accounts of the type "S is P," or "a certain thing has a certain property," do not reach genuine reality. The world cannot be adequately analyzed, in so far as it is a "real" world, into mere "things-having-properties." Such an analysis is faulty for two reasons. First, it separates the subject from the object, the mind from the things it knows—it puts the "mind" outside of the "world." Second, it ignores the vital significance of reality: the fact that we come into contact with reality when we entertain "hopes, sympathies and purposes," rather than when we merely describe objects that do not vitally affect us.

Whitehead condemns the "over-intellectualistic bias" of European philosophy which concedes reality only to matters of fact recorded in a purely descriptive way. To him, philosophy is "a critique of pure feeling," that is, an attempt to discover what non-intellectual experiences, taken seriously, reveal about reality.

A true metaphysics, a philosophy correctly characterizing the

actual and real, must, therefore, do two things. First, it must do away with the duality of subject and object; it must comprehend the actual as being experiencing subject and experienced object in one. And, secondly, this true metaphysics must also do away with the duality of "fact" and "emotion"; it must discover the element of striving and fulfilment in the factual, and the element of factuality and reality in the emotional. Whitehead himself expressed both sides of his conception of philosophy in one of those dazzling shorthand formulas which constitute the secret and charm of his style: he said that his philosophy "abolishes the detached mind."

Neither "mind" nor "matter," neither the "particular" nor the "universal" can be the ultimately real, the authentic core of being, that Whitehead is looking for. He has no use for unchanging, permanent "substances" any more than for passing, disembodied "experiences." He can find reality only in a sort of being that is both subject and object, both perishing and enduring, both private and public, both in one place and everywhere. That he has managed to describe a type of being of such extraordinary versatility without ever getting entangled in hopeless confusion and inconsistency, is in itself an extraordinary feat. I shall try to give an idea of his procedure.

The Protean thing that represents the only type of genuine reality for Whitehead is what he calls, in *Process and Reality,* "actual entity" or "actual occasion." The whole of reality is made up of such "actual entities;" there is nothing real besides them. An actual entity is a kind of atom of reality; it is also a microcosm. While it exists, it somehow senses the whole universe; each actual entity is present in every other one as an object of its "feelings." Not every actual entity is conscious; consciousness is a property of actual entities of a higher order, such as those making up living organisms; but even the actual entities making up such a lowly object as a grain of dust have "feelings" which "objectify" the universe for them. By this token, they are elementary "organisms"; nothing but organisms can truly be said to exist.

"Actual entities," or "occasions," are, however, not complete, individual beings like you and I. They are processes, "throbs of experience" issuing in some sort of satisfaction. When they are complete, they perish as actual entities; but they become immediately immortalized by being inherited by another actual entity whose "past" they

constitute. Individual "things" (including living organisms in the ordinary sense) are "societies" of actual entities; they exhibit an "order" which is peculiar to them and can be analyzed in terms of the actual entities constituting the society, and the various "nexus" existing between them.

What is most characteristic of actual entities, in Whitehead's account, is their dynamic or "vector" quality. They cannot exist without invading other entities. Feeling, and, on higher levels, consciousness, consists in one individual actual entity being in some way present in other individual actual entities. This is, perhaps, the point where Whitehead breaks most radically with traditional metaphysics: in his view, the relationship between the knowing subject and the known object is a direct communion, whereas for traditional metaphysics there is always a mediating agency between the knower and the known. Also, for Whitehead, knowing is essentially a relationship between one *individual* entity and another; knowledge in terms of universals is secondary and fallible. This again is a complete reversal of the position of classical metaphysics.

"Pure feeling," which is a direct communion of actual entity with actual entity is unconscious and inarticulate. Nothing but individual processes enter into it. Higher, conscious knowledge, however, needs universals in order to become articulate. Whitehead calls these universals—which in ordinary speech are designated by property words such as a "blue" and "green"—"eternal objects." It is easy to see why they are termed "eternal": the property "blue" itself is never here and now; it is timeless. What we see here and now is only an *instance* of blueness, exhibited by an entity which *is* here and now. Whitehead describes this fact as the "ingression" of an "eternal object" into an "actual occasion." The eternal object as such, he says, is a mere potentiality; there is no reality, no actual existence outside of the actual occasions.

Is all this a poetic fiction, a mere flight of fancy, or a reasoned account of the real world in so far as it is real? Can we in fact bring ourselves to consider a grain of dust and an electron—or rather, the momentary state of a grain of dust and of an electron—as "organisms" endowed with "feeling"? It is obvious that if we use the words "organism" and "feeling" in their ordinary meaning, the result is nonsense. But it is clear that Whitehead uses these terms metaphorically and

analogically rather than in their ordinary sense. Even the smallest object, he says, in so far as it is real, is somehow related to the whole universe; it beats in unison with the whole universe; it "feels" it. Now "feeling" decidedly is too lyrical an expression to describe this correlation of an atomic event with everything else. But Whitehead needs it in order to adumbrate his principal point, namely, that mental processes are no privilege of an exceptional sort of being. In true philosophy, he holds, they should appear as that which connects man with the whole universe, rather than what separates man from "natural" objects.

Whitehead rejected the traditional philosophies, whether of a metaphysical or empiricist bent, because he found that they were unable to account for "mind" as a fact within nature. According to him, a "naturalism" which equates reality with the totality of observed or observable phenomena but leaves the mind of the observer out of account is no genuine naturalism. The naturalist program for him implied that "mind" somehow had to be imported into nature; and he used metaphysics as a means to achieve this.

II

We may assume, then, that Whitehead's objective was not to overthrow empiricism but to rid it of its imperfections stemming from its unresolved dualism of "mind" and "object." In recent times, however, a philosophical movement continuing the general tradition of empiricism attempted to do away with this dualism without benefit of metaphysics. This movement is logical positivism.

One of the fundamental principles of this school is that discourse, in so far as it asserts something, should be restricted to *decidable* statements—that is, statements such that it can be shown, in principle, whether they are true or false or at least whether they are "probable," and to what extent. Now if we adopt this principle, certain problems will vanish, because it will appear that no decidable statements can be made about them.

The problem of "accounting for the mind as an element in the knowing process" is such a problem. Whatever we say about the role of our "mind" in the process of "knowing" could be verifiable only if it were possible to devise some experiment in which that role could be *varied,* or the "mind" itself could be eliminated. Such experiments,

however, are impossible. "Mind" is only one side of "knowing": whenever knowing is present mind is present, and it always fulfills the same function. For this reason, it is impossible to settle by experiment such questions as whether the contents of our experience are "mind-determined" or "independent of the mind." After all, I cannot demonstrate experimentally that a certain group of objects is "determined by an x," unless I am able to produce, as controls, objects which are "not determined by x." The same applies, obviously, to the experimental demonstration of the statement that a certain group of objects is "independent of an x." Thus, we have the paradoxical situation that an experimental demonstration of either of the two theses given above—"all our experiences are mind-determined," and "all our experiences are independent of the mind"—can be considered as possible only by supposing that the thesis itself is false. Clearly, theses of this kind are not decidable; they must be waved aside as meaningless.

Logical positivism undertakes to show that this predicament inevitably arises whenever we try to make statements about the "whole" of reality or the "whole" of experience. Whatever we say about the whole of reality obviously must be consistent with whatever reality will be found to be like as we investigate its details. But a statement which is consistent with whatever is the case clearly represents no knowledge; it may be true, but then it is tautological. That "P is green or not green" is true whatever P's color in reality is; but if I know about P only that it is "green or not green," I then know precisely nothing about it. A statement may represent true knowledge only if it *restricts* the class of actual experiences that are consistent with it; thus the statement "P is green" restricts the class of actual experiences involving P which are consistent with it to experiences of something green. Only "empirical" statements have this property of restricting the class of experiences consistent with them. "Metaphysical" propositions—*i. e.*, propositions dealing with the totality of things as such—lack this property; on the other hand, they are clearly not analytical statements, *i.e.*, tautologies, because tautologies belong in logic and mathematics. A statement, however, which is neither empirical nor tautological is meaningless; hence, metaphysical propositions are meaningless. In order to extricate empiricist philosophy from the difficulties raised by the dualism of "mind" and "object," we need no metaphysical account of this dualism; all we need is the recognition that the so-called dualism, as a property

embracing all experience and reality, cannot be meaningfully discussed at all; it is no legitimate object of discourse.

Can we, then, not reflect about reality "as such?" We cannot entirely exclude reflections of this kind, since we clearly need a criterion by virtue of which we can recognize certain things and experiences as "real." The logical positivists do not deny this. They say, however, that "metaphysical" statements concerning such "criteria of reality" are, at best, mere "definitions": they indicate in what sense we decide to use the word "real." The point about such "definitions" is that they cannot be either true or false; they merely express decisions. Thus, from a theoretical point of view, we are entirely free to adopt any definition we like, although from a practical point of view, one definition may be more useful than another. This, however, cannot be decided either by inspecting the definition itself or by confronting it with reality.

According to logical positivism, "normative" statements such as ethical postulates (*e.g.,* "it is wrong to betray a confidence accepted," or, in fact, any statement beginning with the words "it is wrong to . . ." or "it is right to . . ."), also are "definitions" in this sense. From a theoretical point of view, they are arbitrary; they cannot either be proved or disproved. Hence, it is futile to argue about them. An argument is worth while only if it concerns either analytical questions (*i.e.,* questions about whether an assertion really *follows* from another assertion), or empirical questions (*i.e.,* questions about whether something is observably the case). Neither of these two sets of questions, however, is a fit subject matter for philosophy. Analytical questions belong to the domain of logic which is now a branch of mathematics; empirical questions fall under the jurisdiction of empirical science. Hence, philosophers cannot even start an argument that is worth while. They are still trying to interest their hearers in discussions about metaphysical and normative issues; but their hearers, if they are wise, know that these issues concern definitions and therefore cannot be fruitfully discussed. According to logical positivism, philosophy itself is a useless pursuit, at least in its traditional forms.

It does not seem to me, however, that logical positivism has succeeded in establishing these points concerning metaphysics, values, and philosophy. The whole argument hinges around the possibility of making a neat separation between "theory" and "practice" such that certain

expressions which make a great deal of difference in practice can be treated as wholly arbitrary in theory. In my view, this is an impossibility. "Theory" is but a part of "practice"—and precisely that part in which arbitrary decisions are not possible. Some practical decisions may be made "blindly," *e.g.,* by tossing a coin. This is possible if it is established beforehand that one outcome is just as good as another. But in theory, I must know where I am going; if I adopt a "definition," it is because I have my reasons.

These reasons may be partly empirical, partly analytical; but the empirical and analytical reasons I may adduce in favor of a metphysical or normative principle are never sufficient. Let us face it: a *metaphysical doctrine or a value system can neither be logically "demonstrated" nor empirically "verified."* This does not mean however, that there is no intelligent way of arguing about them after we have left the field of analytical and empirical arguments. The philosopher, for instance, is in a position to contribute arguments of his own which in the case of certain metaphysical and normative statements of great generality are more germane than analytical or empirical arguments.

What is the philosopher's method? It consists of constructing a synoptical view of the whole system of our beliefs and actions, in so far as they are governed by principles. When a "definition" of the kind described above is proposed, the philosopher attempts to fit it into that system, and to see how it would affect it. The whole synoptical system must always remain consistent; if a new "definition" is such that it would disrupt this consistency, this is a reason against its adoption. But the reasons *for* the adoption of the new "definition" may be even more compelling; in such cases, the philosopher will propose to modify certain principles embodied in his synoptical system.

It is easy to see that the method of the philosopher is neither wholly analytical nor wholly empirical. It is not wholly analytical, because his task is not limited to the elimination of contradictions; in each case, many contradiction-free solutions are possible, and he must choose between them. Nor is the method wholly empirical, since a principle can never be definitely judged by the outcome of an empirical test as such. All we can say is that the philosopher must apply the analytical standards of consistency, as well as the empirical standards of fact-finding; but he must apply both sets of standards in a specific context in which

the main question always concerns the adoption or rejection of principles: principles of disciplined belief and disciplined conduct.

Are philosophical findings "decidable?" Certainly not in a narrow sense, since they never constitute mere statements of fact open to simple verification. But in a wider sense, philosophy does not lack an objective test, since possible shortcomings of a set of principles always become apparent in the long run if people try to live by them. All we have to bear in mind is only that the "tests" of philosophies are neither simple nor clear-cut; what we are testing are life processes and processes of thought, and in most cases we can see only whether the whole process is healthy or not, without being able to give precise criteria of health.

It is, then, difficult to judge the merits of a particular philosophy. But we cannot say that philosophy is a "purely subjective affair." Those who dismiss philosophy as "subjective" should remember that "objectivity" can be defined only in terms of the consistent application of a set of principles; in other words, we can neither conceive nor evaluate objectivity except by the method of philosophy.

Thus, it does not seem that logical positivism has suceeded in its attempts at short-circuiting all the specific problems of philosophy. Where a neat separation is possible between the theoretical and practical, and between the analytical and empirical spheres, logical positivism triumphs. But a specifically philosophical approach is needed to take charge of the zone where these various categories overlap.

If we aspire towards a genuine, synoptical philosophy, we need a more flexible method than the orthodoxy of logical positivism allows for. This orthodoxy easily degenerates into dogmatism, and while logical positivists are often right when they castigate the dogmatism of philosophers, it is the philosophers who represent true empiricism when they take up certain genuine problems which are neglected by the narrow, overly expurgated empiricism of the logical positivist type. With his broad tolerance, his determination not to suppress any aspect of reality that presents itself with vital urgency, Whitehead represents this type of true empiricism.

It is still doubtful, however, as to whether we can discover anything but mere fancy in the fundamental thesis of Whitehead's metaphysics, according to which any object that is real is endowed with "feeling." Can this theory be stated as a formula of "disciplined be-

lief" or "disciplined conduct?" Is it not the negation of any rigorous "discipline" in thinking?

I do not think so. Nothing in Whitehead's metaphysics is due to impulse or uncontrolled "intuition." He proceeds step by step, following the most rigorous logic. The seemingly fanciful thesis of "the philosophy of organism" is the logical consequence of two fundamental propositions he adopts as a working principle: (a) that reality is homogeneous, (b) that mental phenomena are found among attributes of some real objects. If we adopt these propositions, everything else follows.

Now it must be admitted that both (a) and (b) are legitimate philosophical propositions. What (a) conveys in terms of "principles of belief" or of "conduct" is that we should not consider any stratum of being as privileged above others; what (b) conveys is that mental states are not by-products of some more fundamental reality but real in their own right. The upshot of all this is a theory of cosmic democracy, of "solidarity of the universe." Whitehead says that his philosophy "interprets experience as meaning the 'self-enjoyment of being one among many'." It cannot be denied, I think, that the adoption or rejection of these fundamental attitudes makes a difference, and that, therefore, Whitehead's philosophy is capable of a "practical" test.

III

But what is the ultimate meaning of this philosophy?

It would be plausible to maintain that Whitehead belongs to the "anti-intellectualistic" movement in modern philosophy which, according to some, played an important role in the re-emergence of authoritarian political methods and systems. In fact, as we have seen, Whitehead condemns the "over-intellectualistic bias" of western philosophical thought, whether metaphysical or empiricist; he wants philosophy to be a "critique of pure feeling," capable of expressing the core of our "hopes, sympathies and purposes" no less than that of our purely theoretical concepts. The fundamental stratum of experience is for him one of inarticulate feeling; "propositions" are encountered much later in the analysis, and even then they are primarily "lure for feeling" rather than expression of fact. Can we say, then, that Whitehead is, along with Bergson, an apostle of intuition and of the "élan vital," a merciless critic of the failings of the intellect?

Whitehead often expresses agreement with Bergson. It seems to me, however, that his fundamental purpose is diametrically opposed to the anti-intellectualistic philosophies. If theoretical, scientific concepts and propositions do not enter into the foundation of his system, they do constitute its culmination. Whitehead develops his ideas with great care so as to show how logically pure theory, stripped of all undercurrents of "feeling," can be abstracted from full acts of many-dimensional experience. The world of science is, for him, a world of the "extensive continuum"; this is the same world as that of the "genetic order" of the actual entities, only viewed from a different angle. The order of the "extensive continuum," *i.e.*, that of theoretical science, is based upon "efficient" rather than "final" causes. This Aristotelian terminology may sound old-fashioned, but the meaning is clear: science has its own domain in which uncontrolled intuition and uncontrolled emotions play no part. The main thing is, however, that there is no contradiction between these two worlds, that of the "genetic order" of striving, feeling and emotion, and of the "extensive continuum" of efficient causation and abstract analysis. "Feeling" at no point contradicts "knowing."

Ultimately, then, Whitehead's message is one of comprehensive harmony, of the "solidarity of the universe." All facts in the world form an unbroken pattern of unity and agreement. In this world, there is no place for struggle and contradiction. It is the world of the long peace of the nineteenth century, the Victorian world of tolerance and confidence. The Victorian maxim is: "Whatever happens, let it develop. Nothing can be bad if it is allowed to develop its essence." This is the way Whitehead feels. He believes in a kind of "pre-established harmony" between man's inner world and the outside universe; inner experience cannot but reflect the whole; there can be no break between the self and the object.

This idea of a "pre-established harmony" had been dominant in European philosophy for several centuries. It is by no means restricted to Leibniz and other representatives of the "metaphysical" branch of the European tradition; an empiricist like Hume also believes in it. Whitehead is an heir of this tradition; I think he is its last great representative. He belongs to a generation which in its formative years had not yet witnessed the disintegration of its world. Hence his serenity, his cosmic confidence, the utter absence from his system of the spirit of

strife and self-assertion. But in so far as our own generation is concerned, I do not think it can find an answer to some of its crucial problems in Whitehead's system.

Not that Whitehead fails to render justice to intellectual discipline and to exact science; I think it is rather his approach to practical problems, to problems of purpose and value, that is of limited helpfulness in our situation. We can still learn from his uncompromising rejection of "privileged" realms of being, from his universal sympathy and humility. But we can no longer conceive the Good in life as a spontaneous, automatic happening in which we are passively embedded. We feel that the Good needs our own systematic effort in order to be realized. After a few centuries of philosophical tradition based upon the idea of "pre-established harmony," and the self-realization of the Good, it is terribly hard to find a workable starting point in this new direction. Whitehead definitely does not belong to those who explore this new direction of inquiry.

The light which pervades Whitehead's system is the glow of sunset, bathing all objects in the same golden, impartial light. We can still contemplate the picture with delight, and feel nostalgia for the long, radiant day which bids farewell there. But we must realize that for us, the sun has set. We need a philosophy with a different source of illumination. Our philosophy cannot be the gleaming of the parting day; it must be something like a searchlight.

THE NEEDS OF AMERICAN LITERATURE

James T. Farrell

"Serenity," wrote Leo Tolstoy in a private letter," is the cowardice of the soul." Like all generalizations of this character, Tolstoy's statement can be applied in a false, an absolutistic sense. However, it is well to remind writers in America, and especially young ones, of this remark. At present, and in recent years, it has been the smug and conservative critics who have asked writers to be serene. But such advice can almost be boiled down to pious platitudes which present a false and fictitious serenity as a literary program. To the young writer, they have preached generalized words—greatness, dignity, spirituality, faith in man in general—and they have tried to tell him that if he accepts this vague preaching, he will become serene, and he will be able to write with serenity. One of the writers they have often cited has been Tolstoy. Thus, it is fitting that we remember this sentiment of Tolstoy's.

It is cowardice to avoid facing one's problems. We castigate those who do practice this cowardice by associating them with the legendary and now journalistic ostrich. In writing on orientation for writers, it is fitting that we begin with this truism. The starting point for writers should be that which they see as problems, not generalized ideals, not generalized perspectives, not a generalized faith. Perspectives will lead us along the road to real discovery and insight if we forge them for ourselves, rather than if we accept them ready-made from others. Faith will nourish us to persist with stubbornness, patience and confidence if we win it by struggle, by effort. We must dialectically reverse the usual prescriptions given to writers. We must propose to them that writing is an adventure in discovery, in feeling in thinking and in living, and that, in this venture, theirs is the task to forge their own perspectives, of winning their own faith, of discovering their own ideals. These must be gained the hard way, the hard way in terms of literary effort.

When I emphasize that any orientative discussion on literature ought to begin with problems, not ideals, not affirmations of virtue, not pious advice, it is necessary to add some qualifications. For well over a decade in America, as well as elsewhere, a vulgar minded idea of social consciousness has been affirmed by many critics; also, it has often been accepted at face value by many writers. Most frequently, this vulgar minded social consciousness has been bruited about in the name of political interests, political groups, political parties, or even in the interest of the state. During the War, such a vulgar social-consciousness was affirmed, it was embodied in many writings, and used as a critical criterion. This was all in the name of War aims. This vulgar minded social consciousness substitutes form for content: If the correct problems are dealt with in a work of creative literature, if the hero, or the author, or both, then offer the correct political, or politically-oriented statements, the work is thereby judged good and progressive: the author is not an escapist: the work of creative literature has been, accordingly, written in defense of the angels.

I

This kind of vulgarity translates the general problems of society, problems of politics, of economics, of war and peace, into the specific problems of the writer. It establishes journalistic and fashionable themes which flow out of the crises and tensions of the moment not only as the thematic material of literature, but, further, as the means for presenting the very content of consciousness of the characters who are created in literature. The individual tension of the human being is neglected for the formal tensions which exists in society, and which is reflected formally in the tensions of class, group, party and national struggles. In consequence of this, we get book after book, play after play, radio work after radio work, film after film in which the characters burst out in talk which resembles the style of a news paper editorial, and not that of an individual human being discussing how he feels, and expressing it in the individual language of a genuine human being.

The complex psychology of men and women is abandoned for a simplification of the complexity of the political, economic, social world of crisis of the hour. The urgency of the world crisis is used as an excuse for bad writing, for special pleading, for an appeal to the views—often to the ignorance or bewilderment—of the reader, in-

stead of an appeal to his feelings. At its worst, this writing substitutes for the effects of art those which are gained in popular advertising: instead of writing so as to penetrate into the reader's consciousness, to cut beneath the surfaces of mental and emotional habits and of established views and convictions, this writing tends to work on the reader as does a conditioned reflex. It uses art really in order to abuse art. It does not provide the reader with an experience in literature which we can distinguish seriously from the experience most readers have when they sit down with their daily newspaper before them.

On the basis of such vulgar conceptions of literature, on the basis of turning literature into the subservient handmaiden of tendentious politics, economics and established religion, various critics urge the writer to face the problems of his day, and to write about them. Writers are judged differently, in terms of such conceptions, and according to the formal views of the critics and the readers. Confirmation of these formal views constitutes the major demand placed on the artist. And, in addition, the important problems and questions of the day are, also, defined in terms of the views, interests and loyalties of the critic. Usually, such definitions of the problems of the day are made most broadly in terms such as progress versus reaction, democracy versus fascism: sometimes—but with less frequency—the problem is posed as socialism versus capitalism. The writer is told to take sides. He must be for socialism and against capitalism, for progress and against reaction, for democracy and against fascism. Or in some instance, he must be on the side of God and virtue, and against the Devil and sin. Problems are defined so broadly that anyone can deal with them in a meaningless manner by affirming formal loyalties, and by making speeches that contain no more than verbiage. At the same time that this vagueness and generality serve as the basis for posing problems, a fairly hard and fixed political, economic, social or moral attitude is concealed behind it. And then, the writer is urged to produce creative and honest literature out of such an attitude. Frequently, writers accept this advice, and many of the confusions, many of their subjective blockages constitute the price they pay for allowing others to tell them what they ought to think and write. When they accept such easy formulas, writers may gain a superficial and seeming clarity about the world they live in, but they confuse themselves by believing in the conceit that they are doing something to make a better world, and

to help make men better. They lose their own insights, and harden their talents. Many writers who take this path become cynical, and even abandon writing. They finally reach the point where they don't know their own problems, and are completely disoriented. This is one of the reasons for the disappearance from the literary scene of many of the so-called proletarian writers of the early thirties.

II

There is no immediate, direct, mechanical, one-one relationship between the formal statement of the problems of an era, and the psychology, the individual feelings, the views, the personal hopes, tensions, aims, problems of individual human beings. When this connection is made arbitrarily and in a one-one relationship, we have an instance of what Whitehead characterized as the fallacy of "misplaced concretion." The methods of science demand isolation. The methods of political science and political theory, similarly, demand isolation. Political propaganda and agitation also require isolation. This is determined by the character of the problems dealt with. These are truisms of methodology. But as living human beings, we do not make the same isolation when we meet the problem of our own feelings, our own desires, our own troubles. We meet our own problems as living, complex, and even suffering men and women. We have a past, and that past exerts many controlling pressures on us. None of us—as we can now see—thanks to the discoveries of Freud—knows fully the extent of the pressures of the past which work in our own beings.

We live in a world that is forever full of mystery. The starting point of the mystery of the world is our own selves. When the scientist seeks to penetrate into the mystery of the world, he poses his problems in terms of some discovered disharmony between that which has been already discovered and included in the body of systematized knowledge, and that which is seen to be in sudden contradiction with it. He disregards taking into consideration any and all data which does not relate in some essential way to this problem. When the practical politician urges people to act in terms of some political program, he is faced with concrete problems which he either wants to try and solve, or else—as is often the case—to confuse because of special and unstated aims of his own. He needs to get people together to act for certain ends, or else to bring them together so that they think that they are acting, when

they are doing nothing. In these instances of human effort, the aim is that of gaining practical results. The practical results desired condition the actions taken, the knowledge sought, the relevance of the thoughts and feelings one has in seeking to attain these practical results.

But in creative literature, a direct practical result is not the end in view. The creative artist seeks to mirror life, to criticize life, to reveal life, to tell us about it. In one way or another, he deals with the conditions and qualities of living, the states of mind and of social being of men living in society. His practical aim is, thereby, different from the practical aims of politicians, of scientists and of others. His problems, correspondingly, are not the same as the problems of these others. If their problems are transposed into his own problems, the creative artist will become confused. The various vulgar apologists of so-called social consciousness, and those who are equally vulgar apologists of religion and conservative morality, usually bring this confusion into literature. By so doing, they help to prevent literature from performing one of its major potential functions. That function is to make the consciousness of men more free, not less free. The function which these vulgar apologists would give to literature is that of controlling minds and emotions. This is why those whose efforts lead in the direction of centralizing and bureaucratizing the world generally adopt some form of this vulgar approach to literature. Whether or not they think these problems through, they are inevitably led towards methods which enlarge the area of control over the human being, including control over his inner life.

III

These problems can, perhaps, be seen more clearly if they are referred to the problem of literature and revolution. The greatest social changes in history are effected through social revolutions. In social revolutions, the seeds of a new society—as has often been stated—grow out of the shell of the old. The old society is in chaos: in that chaos, new forms, new organizations evolve. The old routines of life are broken down. New figures rise on the stage of history. New social classes march towards their future, and old social classes are uprooted, driven from power, disorganized and more or less smashed as social classes. Such changes are profound and all-sided. But the nature of man is more relatively fixed than is the form of social organization under which he lives in different periods. Men, living through revolu-

tionary times, continue to have a past. Their past is exerted in the inmost layers of their consciousness. It is impossible for a man to lose the total structure of his consciousness. Even in schizophrenia, we find that the schizophrenic who has completely eased his tensions by creating an ideal inner world of his own will continue to reveal how the structure of his consciousness has not been totally destroyed. He will use some of the language of his days of sanity: he will continue, on the stage of insanity, to deal with the problems he faced before his malady destroyed his sense of the reality principle, and his humanity. In revolutionary times, the past of men is not destroyed in their own minds at the same time that the institutions of the past are crushed in one fell swoop. The new structure of class power in society, the new institutions and political forms, the economic emancipation achieved in a social revolution creates the conditions for a new world. But the men living in that world have to catch up with it in their consciousness. This produces a tension in consciousness between the old and the new. The contradictions which have been swept out of society on the plane of social, political and economic action are not, at the same time, swept out of the consciousness of men. In them, the tension of the old and the new will struggle in their waking and their sleeping life. New values exist socially. They seek to live by these new values. The old traditions, the old values have helped, to a greater or lesser extent, to form their values.

If we consider these facts, we will be more able to realize how literature does not follow social change in an even, regular and obedient manner. We can then see, in a more acute way, what this false juxtaposition of problems means in literature. For literature powerfully reflects the tensions of men and women. It is a working out of these tensions imaginatively. The creative artist usually feels the tensions of his time more intimately, more sensitively than does the non-creative person. The reason for this is not that he is, by any necessity, superior to others. Rather, it is his task to deal with consciousness, to draw out and set down in terms of art, a series of images which reflect and reveal these tensions. In this sense, more than in any other, he is a spokesman of his time. Whether he reacts positively or negatively to the issues of his time, the dominant tendencies and currents, he does not escape them. One of the major types of ambiguity in literature—it can be said parenthetically here—is that which is a consequence of the con-

cealment of the issues of a time, the effort to escape from meeting them in the consciousness of the artist himself.

Prefaced by such remarks, let me suggest to the reader that he consider the growth of French literature in the 19th century. This literature was most intimately, most all-sidely affected by the Great French Revolution. The problems which all French men faced after the Revolution were different from those which Frenchmen faced prior to the Revolution. Gradually, generation by generation they found themselves living in a new world, instead of that the *ancien regime*. The Revolution made the ideas and ideals of individualism central in society. The economic, political, and moral assumptions of individualsm were made practcal problems for the heirs of 1789. And individualism is the major theme of French literature in the 19th century. This has often been remarked on. But at the same time, we do not find that all of the great French writers of the 19th century were the defenders of the ideas of the Revolution: in fact, the contrary is, mainly, the case. A large porportion of the masters of the 19th century literature in France were anti-democratic. Balzac defended the ideas of monarchy, religion, and the family (this used as a reactionary political slogan.) He was convinced that the stability of society depended upon re-energizing the ideals of the *ancien regime*. In Stendhal's classic, *The Red and the Black,* the hero, Julien Sorel, cannot live and satisfy his young desires for glory in the society which has grown out of the Revolution: Sorel finds that both the nobility and the bourgeosie stand in the way of a poor, ambitious and idealistic young man who wants to make his way in the world. Stendahl—and Balzac in some of his novels—were the artists of the tragedy of glory.

The tragedy of glory revealed the young man who found nourishment in the ideas of glory and individualism of the Revolution, and who, in seeking to live by these ideas, was crushed. It is true that the young heroes of Balzac and Stendhal live in the crushing period of the reactionary Restoration. But—at the same time—we must remember that Restoration did not unseat the middle class from rule. The tragic story of Stendahl's Julien Sorel, or of Balzac's Lucien de Rubempré, shows us gifted, sensitive, idealistic youths going to their destruction when they try to attain glory. And this ideal of glory is one of the spiritual benefactions of the Revolution. If this be interpreted in a literal sense, it can mean that we must condemn these novelists as

merely reactionary and anti-democratic. If we do this, we merely do not understand the profoundness, the penetration with which they wrote of their time. To the contrary, if we see these novels as imaginative revelations of the manner in which the individual seeks to live in society, in terms of certain dominant values and attitudes of the times, and if we see a tension expressed between the condition of society and the ideals of youth, we can then grasp the simple point that revelation, penetrating representation of life, the exploration of a problem of the times from the standpoint of an individual and a type is part of what is valuable in these novels.

The above suggests a generalization. Nineteenth century French literature tells, in terms of changing conditions from decade to decade, the story of how Frenchmen lived in the new world predicated on the Great French Revolution. In this sense, problems, and not ideology, was the starting point of this literature. But these problems are seen from the standpoint of the individual, his fate, his destiny, his needs, his values, his effort to live by his values, his needs, his aspirations in the new socety. There was a tremendous rise of cultural energy, a great development in the literature of 19th century France. It is related to the Revolution. The new energy, the impetus for this cultural rise develops out of the ideals and the changes which the Revolution effected. But this is a relatively all-sided literature. It is a literature in which there are many tragic stories. It is a great literary tradition in which are listed the names of many writers who were anti-democratic.

Bourgeois democratic society posed the problems of destiny, of psychology, of ambition which these writers dealt with in terms of characterizations and stories. And the works of men like Balzac and Stendhal are penetrating, true in the sense that they are honest and faithful in their mirroring of life, in their revelation of the authors own feelings and values and observations. The vulgar apologists of social consciousness and of morals approach literature from the formal standpoint of values: but they make values programmatic, and demand affirmation or rejection of values as a criterion. Here, if we look at French literature from the standpoint of values, we will see that what is important is not the programmatic acceptance or rejection of values, but rather, the imaginative representations of what happens to men and women, as men and women, in their efforts to live according to the values they do hold. In this sense, the quality of values and not the programmatic significance of

these values is seen to be important. Matthew Arnold once spoke of literature as a criticism of life: he also, I believe, spoke of it as a mirror of life. Literature serves as a mirror and a criticism of life in revealing the quality of values, the story of what happens to men and women, to their feelings and emotions, as well as to their bodies, in their effort to live by their values, and with this, of course, the values of their time and place. And it is, here, as a mirror and a criticism of life, that we see why literature must be free: why the artist must be free and honest. For he must explore the problems, the conditions, the values which are his, and which are those of the characters he writes of as thoroughly and as all-sidedly as he is capable of doing. Only then can he, as an artist, reveal how good or how bad a value is.

The test of a value is how we can live by it, what it does to us in our effort to make it one of the motives of our lives. And the artist works out these tests imaginatively. This is the sense in which the literature of a period serves as the conscience and the consciousness of that period. The literature of a period and of a society is one of the most severe tests of that society. For it really, positively or negatively, for good or for ill, reveals the quality of life, the quality of men and women, the quality of values of that period and that society. To do this should be both the honor and the duty of an artist. To perform his duty, and to justify his claims as an artist, he needs to perform his tasks in the hard way, and not in the easy way which is offered to him by those vulgar and special pleading apologists of social consciousness and conservative morals.

IV

Karl Marx was fond of quoting this line from Dante: *Follow your course and let the people talk.* It is, often, in the name of this same Karl Marx that many would try to wheedle the young writer, to force, to direct him not to follow his course. But it is artistic death to the writer to follow any but his own course. And the writer who follows his own course is not, with any necessity, ignoring the problems and issues of his times. He lives in his own times. He has been moulded by these times.

American literature suffers today from its lack of ideas. The story of modern American literature is a story of so many who started with such promise, and who so quickly outlived their creative lives, who so readily failed to realize their promise. American writers have successively become

easily disoriented. America is a land in which the life of the times has only been touched in its literature. In a country, and in a time, which seethes with life, which is saddened with many tragedies, in which the fate of the world is centered to such a degree, writer after writer finds that he or she doesn't know what to write about. There are no subjects to write of, no new themes, no new ideas. This complaint is made again and again. Book after book retells the same old stories, the same old plots. Endless short story and novel writing courses are given by universities and students are presumably taught so that they might go on and tell and retell the same old stories. All around us, there are problems, there are people, there is a life that goes on in great complexity from moment to moment. Everywhere we turn there are stories, novels to be discovered.

It is a lack of perspective that so often makes it easy for American writers to paralyze themselves. In writing this article, then, it is not my intention to say that writers need no perspectives. But the writer must discover, win and forge his own perspective. That is why I emphasize that problems, the discovery of problems, should be the starting point of the writer. By discovering and defining these, the writer tests the perspectives he now has, tests his own orientation, tests himself; and he also tests the society in which he lives.

In the 1920's, many cultural commentators wrote that America had at last come of age, that it was becoming sophisticated because of the then growing popularity of foreign books and because of the literary energy that was being manifested in this country. Both the foreign books and the literary energy of the twenties were good. But to come of age culturally, more is needed. And what is needed above all else is this awareness of problems, of their seriousness, of their centrality. We are now well into the post-war world. We see it, already, as one of seething contradictions. In such a world, the individual seeks anew to discover, to learn where he is and what he is. The general contradictions of the world in which we live touch all phases of life, even the most intimate. The disruption and insecurity of recent years, the fears and anxieties of recent years, the lesson that this world is complicated, and that the fates of men in many lands are so intertwined for good or for ill—all this and more that is obvious poses problems not only for political leaders, but for all individuals. There is an incipient state of awareness existent in America today, and with this, a sleeping

need for making this conscious, for gaining more culture, more education. A new wave in literature is not necessarily dependent on social change. It can precede and help to effect that change. But a new wave is often dependent on awareness such as this incipient state of awareness which now most definitely exists.

Thus, in seeking to discover and chart his own course, in seeking to meet his own problems of values, feelings, tensions, needs, as well as to grasp the world around him, it is more than likely that the serious writer of the next generation will touch off many sparks, sparks of feeling and thought which have not, as yet, been drawn to consciousness on the part of many. In other words, and despite the laggard cultural tendencies of the present and of recent years, the conditions exist for new ferment. And new ferment is part of the raw material of a new expression of cultural energy. It is more than to be hoped that the best of the new generation wil realize this at the outset. It is more than to be hoped that those who have been educated in fire and battle, in war and in the factory, will now step forth independent, bold, assertive, and that they will begin to reveal the meanings that life has had for them. Goethe said that gray is theory, but green is the tree of life. There has been little of the greenness of life in literature in recent years. There has hardly been even the grayness of theory. It is more than time for a new burst of energy. The writer cannot wait for the creation of a new and better world before he writes. If he continues to write, he must help to furnish the raw materials of awareness which help to make people more aware, more conscious, more alert. His adventure of discovery involves the discovery of his own self, and of his times; this in turn offers a possible adventure for his readers. And for the new generation to try and do this, it can well repeat the words of Tolstoy: "Serenity is the cowardice of the soul." The future in literature belongs not to the serene, but to the bold, the militant, the energetic, the honest and the independent.

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THE LIVING STANDARD OF THE SOVIET WORKER

1928 — 1938 — 1948

Solomon M. Schwarz

The nature of the Soviet social system remains a controversial issue. It is certainly not identical with that of capitalism. That this system is not that of a classless society either is hardly subject to discussion. What then is it? What are the relationships between various classes within Soviet society? Are they harmonious or antagonistic? Have new forms of social domination and social oppression crystallized as a result of three decades of Soviet rule?

Part of the answer lies in the changes that have taken place in the condition of the working class. According to the official doctrine of the Soviet state, wage and salary earners constitute the ruling class of Soviet society. A survey of trends over a thirty-year period in the living standards of Soviet workers may not by itself solve the riddle of the new social system, but it provides factual evidence which sheds light on paramount elements of the problem.

What determines the standard of living of the working class is the prevailing level of wages. To be sure, there are other elements, as well, which modify the picture and which have to be taken into account. Though these other elements are of greater importance in the Soviet Union than they are elsewhere, still they are of secondary importance on general conditions. In our study, *the focal issue is wages.*

* * *

The movement of real wages in the Soviet Union eludes exact measurement. Official data are poor. Figures relative to nominal wage rates more often than not are meaningless because of frequent and far-reaching changes in the purchasing value of the rubles. The official cost-of-living index, which was imperfect, was discontinued in the early 1930's. To discern the most important trends one has to combine all available data, scattered, distorted and incomplete though they may be.

There is no doubt that the living standards of Russian workers dropped drastically during the first years of the Revolution. In the wake of the civil war and the concomitant disintegration of economic life wages and salaries fell to an unprecedented low. According to Soviet sources, average monthly earnings of industrial workers (all industries) in 1920 approximated 30 percent of real wages of Russian workers prior to World War I.[1]

This changed when the "New Economic Policy" (NEP) was inaugurated in 1921. Rapid economic recovery was accompanied by substantial improvements in the level of wages. M. Romanov, the People's Commissar for Labor of the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic (the main constituent part of the USSR), was apparently justified in stating in 1929 that average real wages in the year ending September 30, 1928 had reached some 111 percent of the pre-war level.[2]

This was a high not to be surpassed in later years. On October 1, 1928, the First Five-Year Plan was put into effect, inaugurating a new era of wholesale planning and speeded-up industrialization, the Stalin era proper. The upward trend of real wages experienced a thorough reversal. True, the First Five-Year Plan envisaged a 42 percent rise in the average level of nominal monthly earnings to be achieved in five years along with a decrease in the cost of living of 14 percent.[3] Thus, real wages in the year ending September 30, 1933, would have been more than two-thirds above the 1928 level. But in this respect the Five-Year Plan was by no means fulfilled.

Giant and accelerated industrial construction in a background of universal scarcity of goods engendered an inflationary fever which made nominal wages rise even far beyond the limits contemplated in the Five-Year Plan. Yet, at the same time, prices climped still higher and offset any and every wage increase. Real wages declined steeply. For the first three years of the First Five-Year Plan, data on workers' spending budgets were still collected and released. Computed from these data, the purchasing power of average earnings of all wage and salary earners

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[1] See the Russian-language publication of the then leading Soviet economist, S. G. Strumilin, *Wages and Productivity of Labor in Russian Industry in* 1913-1922, Moscow, 1923, p. 28. For a more detailed analysis of the dynamics of wages in the early years of Soviet rule, cf. my book, *Der Arbeitslohn und die Lohnpolitik in Russland*, Jena, 1924.

[2] In the government-published review (since discontinued), *Ekonomicheskoye Obozreniye*, March, 1929, p. 125.

[3] Official *Five-Year Plan* publication, vol. II, 2, 2nd ed., Moscow, 1930, pp. 186, 208f.

decreased 50 percent.[4] *It actually fell below the level attained in Tsarist Russia on the eve of World War I.*

* * *

The decline in the purchasing value of wage income was clearly due to inflation. In order to curb the upward spiral of food prices, and thus to prevent nominal wages from following suit, the Soviet Government as early as 1929 introduced food rationing in all urban and industrial communities. First it rationed bread, then soon afterwards cereals, sugar, tea, meat, butter, etc. In contrast to what usually happens in other countries, this, however, did not imply the abolishment of free trade in rationed goods.

While wartime, and in some cases post-war rationing in the United States, in England and Continental Europe was aimed at equalized distribution of scarce commodities and, consequently, necessitated the elimination of non-controlled supply, rationing in the Soviet Union was focused on a different, and strictly limited, objective. The urban working masses (and in a few cases certain rural groups) were to be guaranteed the supply of standard minimum quantities of food and a few industrial commodities at stable prices automatically exempt from inflationary pressure. At the same time the consumer was free to buy additional quantities of the same goods outside of rationing channels, in a perfectly legal "free" market. In 1930 the Government itself entered the "free" market as a supplier. Special "commercial" stores were established in which the Government offered for sale food and other consumer goods, charging enormous inflationary prices.

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[4] To conceal the rising consumer expenditure, the cost-of-living index was no longer published after 1929. But in the May-June, 1931, issue of *Planovoye Khozyaistvo,* publication of the State Planning Commission, G. Pollyak, an outstanding expert at that time on labor statistics, discussed quarterly data on the annual increase of consumers' spending budgets from October 1, 1928, to October 1, 1930, also indicating the increase of the cost-of-living index in October, 1930, as against October, 1929. If the latter figure should be taken as indicative of the entire year ending September 30, 1931, the increase in the cost of living in three years would amount to 145 percent. But the upward trend of prices continued at a markedly more rapid pace after October, 1930, and the actual increase was far in excess of that recorded in the October index figure. In reality, the three-year increase in the cost of living was considerably above 150 percent, probably near 200 percent. During that period, average nominal earnings rose 54 percent in all spheres of labor, 33 percent in industry proper (computed from 1927-8 data taken from *Five-Year Plan,* as quoted above n. 3, and from 1930-31 data taken from V. Tsybulskii, *Wage Policy During* 15 *Years of Proletarian Dictatorship,* Moscow, 1932, p. 31). Accordingly, the average three-year decline of real wages must have been no less than 40 percent for all spheres of labor taken together, or respectively, 50 percent and more for industry proper.

From the early 1930's on, the gulf between rationing prices and those charged in the free market or in "commercial" stores became practically unbridgeable. True, rationing prices did not remain stable, either; gradually they too were raised. Still, they lagged far behind the skyrocketing free and "commercial" prices. Wage rates, meanwhile, were determined on the illusory assumption that it was possible for large masses of wage and salary earners to live chiefly on rationed food. Actually, the consumer was more and more compelled to resort to the free market for the purchase of necessities.

Starting in 1932, the Government tried its utmost to bridge the immense gap. Repeatedly, rationing prices were raised while "commercial" prices were lowered which also had a depressing effect on price trends in the free market. This was to pave the way for decontrol. In fact, rationing was abolished in two successive steps in 1935. From October, 1935, until the Soviet Union's entry into World War II, the Soviet consumer got along without the blessing of ration cards. He had quite some reason to enjoy the freedom.

The trend of real wages during the four years preceding decontrol is not easy to assess with any degree of precision. The rise of nominal wages, to be sure, outdistanced the upward movement of rationing prices. But the sphere of rationed supply dwindled, and the consumer increasingly was driven into the free market where prices had begun to go down since 1933. From the scarce data that are available, it seems safe to conclude that on the whole real wages 1931-1935 oscillated around the level to which they had fallen during the three initial years of the Five-Year Plan era, *i.e.*, some 40 to 50 percent below 1927-8 standards.

* * *

After 1935 the situation became less complicated. Prices charged by government stores remained more or less stable throughout the following three years at the level set in October, 1935; the price curve in the free market kept close to that of government prices. Nominal wages went on rising, which at last amounted to an increase in real wages. Looking back today, one cannot help viewing the 1935-38 wage trend as the most favorable that ever was recorded in the twenty-year period from 1928 to 1948.

As 1928 was the peak year in the Twenties, so 1938 was the peak year in the Thirties. And still, real wages in 1938 continued to lag behind those prevailing in 1928, on the eve of the Five-Year Plans.

Changes in the purchasing power of wages may be gathered from a comparison between the nominal wage trend and price trends in the food market. Data on nominal wages are easy to find in Soviet publications. Average monthly earnings (for all wage and salary earners) rose from 57.50 rubles in the year ending September 30, 1928, to 288.90 rubles in 1938 (calendar year), a nearly five-fold increase.[5] What about prices? According to the available data,[6] price changes for the most important food items (no comparable data are available for other consumer goods) in the Soviet capital were as follows:

RETAIL PRICES IN COÖP STORES IN MOSCOW[7]
(Rubles per kilogram; eggs, per piece)

Food Item	1928 *April*	1938 *July*	*Ratio* 1938 : 1928
Black rye bread	.08	.85	10.6
White bread (wheat)	.26	1.70	6.5
Flour, wheat	.22	2.90— 4.60	17.0
Butter	2.43	17.50—20.00	7.7
Beef	.87	7.60—11.50	11.0
Lamb	.79	8.00— 9.60	11.3
Potatoes	.085	.40	4.7
Sugar	.62	3.80— 4.10	6.4
Eggs	.20	.65	3.3
Rice	.46	6.50	14.1

Data for eggs and potatoes are slightly "off key" for obvious reasons—too high for eggs in 1928 because of the seasonal rise (the April figure reflects the pre-Easter rise), too low for potatoes in 1938 because of the price pressure exercised by the new crop ("new

[5] Data for 1927-8 from *Five-Year Plan,* as quoted above n. 3; data for 1938 from *Planovoye Khozyaistvo,* May, 1939, p. 11.

[6] Study of Russian price movements is fraught with great difficulty as the Soviet press refrains from regularly printing the basic data. Prices, as actually charged, are only occasionally referred to, and this very seldom. Only once did the People's Commissariat for Labor of the USSR furnish corresponding data for ILO international surveys. They refer to April, 1928, and are reproduced in our table from *International Labour Review,* October-November, 1928, p. 659. For 1938 a number of price quotations were recorded by the U. S. Embassy staff in Moscow, see *Monthly Labor Review,* November, 1939, pp. 1277f. In our table all comparable data are included that were to be found in the two sources for both years. The only price omitted is that charged for milk, .063 rubles a liter in 1928, and 1.60 rubles in 1938, a more than twenty-five-fold increase. This manifestly is wrong. Probably the 1928 price referred to a tumbler (about a pint or less), not a liter.

[7] Wherever the source used for 1938 indicates different price quotations for various grades of an identical commodity—as shown by the price range in the July, 1938, column—the mean between the low and the high was taken as the 1938 figure for computing the ratio.

potatoes" usually influence the July price). Aside from these two items, all prices rose from 1928 to 1938 in a much higher proportion than did norminal wages. For the consumer's spending budget the ratio of increase shown for rye bread, sugar, meat and butter is of particular importance.

This evidence is not sufficient for an exact computation of the percentage of decline in real wages between 1928 and 1938. It is obvious, however, that the lowest possible estimate of the average increase in the general price level would be somewhere in th vicinity of the six or 6.5-fold; whereas nominal earnings increased only five-fold. It is safe to assume, then, that real wages during the 1928-1938 decade declined, in the final analysis, no less than 20 percent. This was the decade of the First and Second Five-Year Plans.

* * *

Another series of price increases began in the second half of 1938; any effects of the upward movement of nominal wages were soon annihilated. Prices soared from mid-1939 to mid-1940; but even this was topped by torrential increases which followed later, during war years. *What actually happened between* 1938 *and* 1940? A summary analysis is called for. It will be especially helpful for the evaluation of post-war events as most comparisons are based on 1940 as the last pre-war year.

Average monthly earnings of wage and salary earners in 1940 were 17.2 percent above the 1938 level.[8] But prices had risen far more rapidly. The price movement was closely observed by the U. S. Embassy staff in Moscow, which reported not only price changes in government stores but also the disappearance of a number of important items from sales counters. Numerous food items, for which prices had been recorded in 1936, simply were no longer to be bought. The Embassy staff's comment on the situation observed by January 1, 1940, was as follows:

> *". . . Such essential commodities as milk, butter, eggs, sugar, potatoes, and various others listed in the table as 'available' are on*

[8] The Fourth Five-Year Plan (1946-1950) envisaged average monthly earnings of 500 rubles in 1950. This, according to N. A. Voznesenski, chairman of the State Planning Commission, would have been a 48 percent increase over 1940. The average monthly figure for 1940 must thus have amounted to 339 rubles. (See Supreme Soviet proceedings in *Pravda*, March 16, 1946.)

sale only irregularly, and apparently in insufficient quantities. This results in long queues of customers who wait for hours in front of the stores. Under such circumstances the State-store prices quoted become only nominal or at best of secondary importance, since the existing situation considerably restricts the actual consumption of foodstuffs by the population.

"Furthermore, the acute shortage of essential commodities in the State-stores has caused the open-bazaar market prices to soar to abnormally high levels. As a result the average difference or 'spread' between State-store and open-market prices on available goods, as listed in the table, now amounts to over 78 percent." [9]

Of 80 food items listed in the Embassy table as on sale in Moscow food stores on July 1, 1938, prices could be recorded for only 47 by July 1, 1940. Only prices of bread, flour, salt, had remained stable. For other foods still listed in the stores prices climbed high in two years: sugar, 34 percent; butter, 44 percent; meat (average for six items), 84 percent; smoked meats (average for 8 items, including ham, bacon, sausage, etc.), 44 percent; vegetables, over 100 percent. Prices of other consumer goods also went up sharply, clothing (nine items), 79 percent; cltohing material (fabrics, 4 items), over 100 percent. [10] In addition, the Embassy report referring to the spring months of 1940 said: "Gas, water and electricity rates have also been increased recently in Moscow, these increases ranging from 25 to 100 percent." [11]

This indicates that the average 17.2 percent increase in nominal earnings of workers and salaried employees which occurred between 138 and 1940 lagged far behind the increase in the cost of living. Through the exact decline in the purchasing value of the worker's ruble is impossible to measure, there is no doubt that the standard of living of the working masses was once more substantially lowered.

In June, 1940, working hours were lengthened by government decree without any increase in wage income. Both the seven-hour day, which had applied to large categories of manual workers since the early 1930's, and the six-hour day, traditional for the overwhelming majority of non-manual workers, were superseded by the eight-hour day (48-hour week). At the same time the Council of People's

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[9] *Monthly Labor Review,* 1940, p. 1272.

[10] From data in *Monthly Labor Review,* February, 1941, pp. 475f.

[11] *Op. Cit.,* August, 1940, p. 501.

Commissars ordered that monthly and weekly earnings were to remain unchanged, and that piece rates were to be lowered, so as to prevent any increase in take-home pay through longer hours of work.[12]

* * *

After the Soviet Union entered the war on June 22, 1941, the situation further deteriorated. Rationing was re-established at once, and food prices for quantities allotted to the consumer through rationing channels generally were kept stable throughout the war, at the price level which prevailed in government stores at the beginning of hostilities. But actual supply of food through rationing channels was highly unsatisfactory; even the low rations were not always available; in many places the only food the consumer could hope to get on ration cards was bread.

Practically, only a minor part of the normal food intake was available to the consumer at rationing prices. To a rapidly increasing degree food had to be purchased in the open market, where prices soon reached fantastic heights. According to information published by the chairman of the State Planning Commission.[13] the "city index of *kolkhoz* prices" in 1943 was 12.6 times as high for all plant products as it had been in 1940, and 13.2 times as high for animal products. In 1940 prices in the open city market, where *kolkhoz* farmers sell victuals, already were far above those charged in government stores (78 percent higher, as shown in the U. S. Embassy report quoted above). It logically follows then that the average price level in the free market in 1943 must have been some 20 or possibly 25 times higher than that of government-store prices prior to the war (or, respectively, that of wartime food rations).

There certainly was an increase in wage income in the course of the war. A few days after the outbreak of the war, plant and office managers were authorized to extend working hours to 10 or 11. Hours worked in excess of the regular eight-hour day now were considered overtime, to be paid at a rate of time and one-half.[14] Ten-hour day

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[12] The two decrees, dated June 26, 1940, were made public in *Izvestia,* June 27, 1940.

[13] N. A. Voznesenskii, *War Economy of the USSR in the Period of the War for the Fatherland* (Russian), Moscow, 1947, p. 129. The "city index of *kolkhoz* prices" had not been published for fifteen years; that it still was being computed remained unknown prior to the publication quoted.

[14] *Izvestia,* June 27, 1941.

and sixty-hour week soon became the general rule, and a number of plants and government agencies introduced the eleven-hour day and the sixty-six-hour week. The number of daily hours worked per worker, states the chairman of the State Planning Commission, increased 22 percent between 1940 and 1942 [15] (no later data available).

This alone should have resulted in a 33 percent increase of nominal earnings. Furthermore, increases in earnings were permitted conditional upon improvements in the productivity of labor, and for some groups of wage and salary earnings special raises were granted by the government. So far no data have been published on the increase of earnings in all spheres of labor; in industry proper average earnings rose 42 percent from 1940 to 1944.[16]

* * *

The high price differential between rationed food and food purchased in the open market produced a wide gulf between wage and real income. This, naturally, could not be tolerated indefinitely. During the early months of 1944 the government again appeared in the free market as a seller of food. Numerous "commercial" stores were put into operation in which practically everything was sold without any specific restrictions, in unlimited quantities, even food items otherwise rationed. The prices charged, however, were sky-high, more or less on the free market level.

In this way the government competed with the free-market seller and had a chance to exert some pressure on free-market prices. During the second half of 1944, and subsequently in 1945 and 1946, prices in "commercial" stores were gradually lowered. Correspondingly, a downward movement of prices became noticeable in the open market.

On September 15, 1946, another step was taken to cut the differential between rationing and free-market (or "commercial") prices and prepare for the elimination of the very phenomenon of "dual prices," which in turn was to facilitate universal decontrol. Rationing prices were set very much higher than previously (an average increase of about 200 percent), while "commercial" prices suffered an average one-third cutback. Simultaneously wage and salary earners with a

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[15] Voznesenskii, as quoted above n. 13, p. 114.
[16] *Op. cit.*, p. 118.

monthly income not exceeding 900 rubles, *i.e.,* the overwhelming majority, were given a monthly raise ranging from 80 to 110 rubles,[17] a tiny compensation which did not make up for the surplus cost of rationed food.

Finally, a year later, rationing was abolished in entirety. In official terminology, "deployed Soviet trade" was to be the substitute. A decree of December 14, 1947, which also caused a currency reform to be carried through, abolished both ration cards and "commercial" prices. New prices for the government stores were set at the level of the last (rather high) rationing prices.[18] Based on these prices, which are supposed to be universally valid, it is simple to compute the purchasing power of present day wages and compare it to the level of real wages attained in pre-war years. A quasi "normal" situation has been contrived.

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How does this new "normalcy" appear in terms of every-day expenditures? During the war there was an increase in earnings due to longer hours of work. But when the eight-hour day and the forty-eight hour week were reintroduced after the war was over, a sharp decrease of wages followed. The Fourth Five-Year Plan, as approved in March, 1946, planned average monthly earnings of all wage and salary earners to rise, by 1950, to a level 48 percent in excess of that of 1940, corresponding to an actual figure of 500 rubles a month. As rationing prices were raised in the fall of 1946 a rising of wages not envisaged when the plan was approved became unavoidable. Thus, early in 1948 average wage and salary earnings already were approximately as high as they were supposed to be in 1950. This was approximately 70 percent above the 1938 figure. But while nominal earnings rose 70 percent or 1.7 times in ten years, how did prices in 1948 compare with prices in 1938? Let us look at the figures:[19]

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[17] *Izvestia,* September 16, 1946.

[18] *Pravda,* December 15, 1947. For a detailed discussion of the new currency plan and de-rationing, see my articles in *The New Leader,* December 20, 1947, and January 17, 1948.

[19] 1938 data from the source cited in n. 6 above; 1948 data from *Pravda,* December 15, 1947. In 1948 some government prices were lowered by 10 to 20 percent; this, however, referred only to caviar, beverages, cigarettes, in addition to some industrial commodities beyond the reach of the working consumer mass, such as automobiles, bicycles, radio sets, field glasses, etc. (*Pravda,* April 10, 1948).

RETAIL PRICES IN MOSCOW GOVERNMENT AND COÖP STORES [20]

(Rubles per kilogram; milk, per liter; eggs, per piece)

Food Item	1938 *July*	1948 *January*	*Ratio* 1948 : 1938
Black rye bread	.85	3.00	3.5
Wheat bread	1.70	4.40	2.6
Buckwheat grits	3.50	12.00	3.4
Macaroni	5.00	10.00	2.0
Sugar (lump)	4.10	15.00	3.7
Beef	9.60	30.00	3.1
Butter (highest grade)	20.00	64.00	3.2
Herring (salted)	5.50	20.00	3.6
Salt	.05	1.40	28.0
Milk	1.60	3.00—4.00	2.2
Eggs	.65	1.20—1.60	2.2

Food prices in 1948 apparently were about three times as high on the average as in 1938, possibly even higher. As nominal earnings in the course of the decade rose 1.7 times, this is tantamount to a decline in real wages of at least 40 percent. This refers to weekly earnings based on notably longer hours, not to hourly rates. The purchasing power of hourly rates must have dropped more steeply.

To be sure, the comparison of the real value of wages in 1948 as against 1938 takes into consideration the main food items only. Corrections might have to be made should data on other consumer expenditure items become available. Yet, whatever the corrections, the general picture will hardly be affected. And the general picture, briefly summarized, looks like this:

From 1928 (*peak year in the* 1920's) *to* 1938 (*peak year in the* 1930's), *real weekly earnings of wage and salary earners declined about* 20 *percent in terms of purchasing power, while average hours worked were slightly reduced. By* 1948 *real weekly earnings in terms of purchasing power dropped about* 40 *percent as against* 1938, *while the number of hours worked increased substantially. As compared to* 1928, *the total decline in real wages in* 20 *years amounts to about* 50 *percent.*

* * *

Wage-price trends as shown indicate a substantial lowering of the standard of living of Soviet working people. Wages proper do not, of course, include a number of services by which working men and

[20] Whenever different prices are indicated for various grades, the mean was used for computing the ratio.

women benefit in their daily lives. Health service and medical care are free in the Soviet Union. There is a social insurance system to which wage and salary earners do not contribute any dues. No fees are charged for primary education, vocational training, etc. All such services are considered in the Soviet Union as the "socialized wage," an increment to the "individual" wage paid for work done.

What the Soviet language calls the socialized wage certainly is no Soviet specialty. It is true, however, that services supplied free have a greater influence on the wage earner's living standard in the Soviet Union than in other countries. Still it is a gross exaggeration to say that they add 38 percent to average "individual" wages, as was recently stated in the Soviet press.

At any rate, for the evaluation of changes in time with respect to the workers' standard of living, it is not the value at any given moment of services provided by public agencies that matters. What does matter is the change, if any, in the relation between "socialized" and "individual" wages, *i.e.,* between free services and money wage. Close study reveals that during the last two decades pracctially no change has taken place in the proportion of free services in the average worker's total budget. No increase in the ratio of social services to wage income has come to offset the heavy actual decline in real wages.

How, then, can workers make ends meet? How can they function on the depreciated income they earn? Modern industrialized society is impossible unless at least those groups of wage and salary earners which are assigned important functions in industry, and in the national economy as a whole, are guaranteed the necessities of life. How indeed do Soviet workers manage to live—and work—on the low average income shown by the official data discussed above?

* * *

The Soviet government seeks to solve this crucial problem by singling out for preferential treatment certain groups of working people, "leading" groups, those especially important for the fulfillment of production programs. They indeed enjoy a tolerable, and in some instances a rather high standard of living, far above the statistical average. The guiding principle of Soviet wage policy is the promotion of extremely high wage differentials, piece work and incentive wages, fantastic premiums for "record" workers. Widely disseminated, ceaselessly reiterated propaganda slogans praise the system as the spe-

cifically "socialist" way of solving the problems of remuneration of labor.

Wage differentials increase as time goes by. The gulf between high and low wage income brackets has been consistently widening throughout the years. Two examples may illustrate the enormous range of wage income stratification.

As early as the mid-1930's a Soviet statistician, S. Kheinman, authority on labor statistics, contentedly recorded notable differences in food consumption as between high-paid and low-paid wage and salary earners. The material was taken from family-budget inquiries in actual food intake, particularly in regard to products of high nutritional value. It appeared that consumers in the highest wage bracket ate 5.7 times as much meat as those in the lowest wage bracket, 17 times as much butter, 6.7 times as much fruit, 1.8 times as much fish.[21]

Social stratification certainly was not at its peak in the mid-1930's. Pay differentiation increased more and more in the years that followed. Quite recenty, *Pravda* gleefully told its readers about a mine worker, Yevgenii Pastukhov, who "in 22 months fulfilled seven yearly quotas and during that time earned 350,000 rubles.[22] In 1946 and 1947 the men averaged 15,900 rubles a month! Yet average wages in the Soviet Union (all wage and salary workers) did not reach even as much as 500 rubles a month until late in 1947.

No doubt, the highest-paid "record" workers, a small minority, manage well. And the rest? The 500-ruble figure is a statistical abstraction computed from a wide range of stratified incomes, wherein the 10,000- and 15,000-rubles top incomes weigh heavier in the balance than the 200-ruble pay envelopes of the underprivileged. By simple arithmetic, monthly earnings of the majority of wage and salary earners must be below the 500-ruble average. Again, how do the latter contrive to keep afloat?

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There is one simple way to increase a family's wage income—have more family members do salaried work. This is what actually happens in the Soviet Union. Two decades ago the number of gainful workers within one working-class family unit was already higher in

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[21] *Planovoye Khozyaistvo,* August, 1936, p. 116.
[22] *Pravda,* January 30, 1948.

the USSR than in most capitalist countries. This specific feature of Soviet life has become more pronounced since. According to official family budget studies, the number of dependents per gainful worker in workers' families decreased from 2.46 in 1927 to 2.05 in 1930 to 1.75 in 1932 and to 1.59 in 1935.[23]

Of the greatest importance is the increase in the employment of women (particularly, wives of wage earners). Since the early 1930's, the Soviet Union has become the country with the most widespread employment of women as wage and salary workers. Even before the war the proportion of women among wage and salary earners was 38 percent in all spheres of labor, and 41 percent in industry proper.[24] Women's work naturally increased still more in wartime, but the trend does not seem to have been reversed after the war. Most recent data indicate 47 percent women among wage and salary earners in all spheres of labor in 1947.[25] In terms of peacetime conditions, this is a world record.

To a certain extent the increase in the number of bread-winners per family unit mitigates the impact of the declining purchasing power of the earner's income. This amounts to saying that on the whole the joint income of an average working-class family decreased less, sometimes substantially less, than did the average wage. But this also means that in order to subsist a working-class family in the Soviet Union has to do much more remunerative work than may be gathered from data on working hours per individual worker.

In addition, the average wage or salary earner has to put in a number of working hours outside of his place of employment. By the time the Soviet Union entered the war, the decline of wages in terms of purchasing power had reached such frightening proportions that some other way had to be found to bolster the worker's real income. The Soviet Government chose the way of sponsoring the operation of private or cooperative vegetable gardens by urban wage and salary earners. This type of vegetable gardening developed on a large scale during the war (as did, victory gardens, for example in England), but

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[23] Data for 1927 from the official review, *Ekonomicheskoye Obozreniye,* March, 1930, p. 85; for later years from the official abstract of labor statistics, *Trud v USSR,* Moscow, 1936, p. 342.

[24] Voznesenskii, as quoted above n. 13, p. 111.

[25] *Pravda,* March 8, 1948.

it definitely still retains its full importance as one of the major sources of food supply.

In 1946 the number of wage and salary earners engaged, after work hours, in vegetable gardening exceeded 18,000,000 (out of a total number of wage and salary earners of about 30,000,000). On the average every family operating a vegetable garden of its own, or taking part (also after work hours) in a cooperative vegetable garden, extracted an annual crop of some 500 kilograms (about 1,100 pounds) of potatoes, vegetables, etc.,[26] making for a considerable improvement in the family food budget. For 1947 further expansion of vegetable gardening was envisaged. Even if the above figures are to be regarded as exaggerated (which is quite likely), the importance of this additional source of sustenance for the standard of living of Soviet working masses should not be underestimated.

Both the increase in the number of wage earners per family and the spread of vegetable gardening among urban workers check to a certain extent the decline of the average joint family income from wages and salaries. But both factors also heavily increase the family work load.

These changes in real wages and in living standards of the Soviet wage-earners reflect the complicated processes of the new social stratification in the Soviet Union and the trend to sharp social antagonisms in the forming of the fabrics of the Soviet society.

[26] From *Trud*, official daily newspaper of the All-Union Central Trade Union Council, February 18, 1947.

THE SOVIET PRESS

Waclaw Solski

An American journalist recently asked a Russian Communist what, in his opinion, was the most important internal weapon in the Soviet political arsenal. The Russian promptly replied: *the Soviet press.* The Russian Communist party, even before it seized power, considered the press its most powerful weapon, and the history of the Bolsheviks prior to 1917 mainly consisted of internal feuds for the control of party organs, especially for the most important one, *Pravda,* the first issue of which appeared on May 5, 1912. To commemorate this date, the Russians have made it an annual holiday, called "Press Day."

In the first years following the revolution, the Soviet press depended to a great extent for its material on *rabkors* and *selkors* (workers and rural correspondents) whose number at one time reached half a million. However, the *rab-* and *selkor*-organizations were dissolved during the purge of 1937. Some workers still write letters to the papers, but these letters are usually directed to the M.G.B. (formerly the GPU), which thus keeps itself informed. The once famous wall-newspapers also changed their character. They were once written by the workers themselves and they often criticized the local authorities. They are now nothing more than pillories, exclusively denouncing workers for "laziness" or "inefficiency" and never attacking the higher-ups. The denounced are forbidden by law to remove these newspapers from the factory bulletin boards. It is interesting to note, that article 74 of the new Soviet Code of Criminal Procedure *provides for a penalty of* 5 *to* 15 *years for such an offence, while the punishment for libel or slander is only* 6 *months or a fine of* 300 *rubles.*

The Soviet press grew rapidly after the revolution. One of the main reasons for its rapid development was the creation, by the Soviet Academy of Sciences, of 55 alphabets for various nationalities which until then had never possessed written languages. Of the 4,186 news-

papers published in Russia at present, more than half (2,294) are non-Russian.*

All of these newspapers, as well as 1,449 magazines, published in the Soviet Union, are, of course, completely Bolshevik. No other press is allowed in Russia. And yet according to the Stalin Constitution of 1936, freedom of the press is guaranteed by Article 125 of the Constitution which reads as follows:

> *In conformity with the interests of the working people, and in order to strengthen the socialist system, the citizens of the USSR are guaranteed by law:*
>
> *a) Freedom of Speech.*
>
> *b) Freedom of the Press.*
>
> *These civil rights are ensured by placing at the disposal of the working people and their organizations printing presses, stocks of paper, public buildings and other material, necessary for the exercise of these rights.*

Since the end of the war, such magazines as *The Soviet Woman* (a *Ladies Home Journal,* Russian style) have appeared. This magazine features articles entitled "Wrinkles Are Beginning to Appear—How Can I Prevent Them?" Its first number devotes four pages of photographs to Galia Ulanova, a well-known ballerina, who is a protegé of Zhdanov. Another small but rather curious new publication is a monthly magazine called *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate,* which, along with articles on the methods of preparing incense, contains sharp criticism of Vatican policies.

But all of these publications are also, of course, supervised by the party. In order to control the press, the party has created a powerful and complicated machinery. The highest authority for the press is *Agitprop*—the Agitation and Propaganda Division of the Central Committee of the Communist Party. *Agitprop* is headed by Suslov.

The Press-Section of *Agitprop* appoints editors to the leading papers and supervises their policy. Editors on lower levels are appointed by the next higher party units, but all editors, without exception, must be approved by *Agitprop*. *Pravda* is responsible for the edi-

* Official Soviet sources list 8,769 newspapers, but 4,583 are small factory hand-outs, published irregularly.

torial policy of all newspapers in Moscow with the exception of *Izvestia*. The local party papers likewise supervise all other publications. In addition, each Soviet paper is constantly being observed and supervised by several organizations:

1. By the Central (or the local) Press Section of the party.
2. By the Press Division of the MGB.
3. By the *Glavlit* (Censorship Office), which must put its seal of approval on all published matters.

Despite this strict and manifold control, unpleasant accidents sometimes occur. For example, Stalin some time ago spoke to a selected group of high-ranking party officials on the occasion of the election to the Supreme Soviet. All the papers published an identical account of Stalin's speech, and reported that he concluded by saying:

> *"It is now up to you to say whether the Communist Party has worked and is working as it should. (Laughter). I think that the election may be compared to a trial: the party is the defendant and you have to pass judgment on its activity. The result of the election has to be regarded as the verdict of the people."*

After Stalin's last words the audience, according to the press, again burst into hearty laughter.

It was a Soviet vote, which meant that only one ticket existed. The supposition that one could criticize the party and vote for some non-existing ticket was preposterous indeed under such circumstances. But this was not the idea the newspapers were trying to convey. *What they really wanted to say was that Stalin's leadership was so faultless that the mere idea of trying to criticize it provoked laughter in the audience.*

The press, however, did not quite succeed in conveying this idea and for days afterwards Russians, smiling silently, showed each other the account of Stalin's address. This greatly disturbed the authorities, and an investigation was ordered by the MGB. It was then discovered that Stalin's speech had been prepared for the press by none other than A. Mechlis, Stalin's former secretary and the former editor of *Pravda*. Mechlis certainly could not be suspected of sabotage, so the matter rested at that. But for his involuntary humor, he was removed from all the important posts he held.

A typical number of *Pravda*—or of any Soviet newspaper—contains an editorial, usually written in trite language, in which Stalin's

name is mentioned at least once, but usually several times. The editorial is followed by one or two articles depicting the state of affairs in some sphere of agriculture or industry. At least once a month Moscow witnesses some session of the Soviet, a display of troops, a spot parade, etc. Long speeches are given on such occasions and the papers print liberal excerpts from them. This sometimes takes up the whole of the first and second page for the period of two, three and even four days. If it is a session of the Supreme Soviet, or any such gathering, all the speeches are very much alike. The delegates—all representing some branch of the government—always begin with the statement that the authority they represent was rather successful in its work, but not successful enough. They promise to do better in the future and wind up by thanking Stalin for his wise leadership and by asking all those present to shout "Long Live Comrade Stalin," which, naturally, everyone does.

On the third or on the fourth page—Soviet papers hardly ever have more than four pages—the reader finds dispatches from other Soviet cities and towns. Most of them are concerned with some large factory and its output. The correspondents sometimes criticize the manager of a factory or some local authority, but they never attack the higher-ups, unless they are given the green light to do so. As a rule, the really important men have to be removed from their posts *before* the press may criticize them.

It is different with local men. They are not permitted to argue with the newspapers, but they are not allowed to ignore them either. The proper thing to do is to write a letter to the editor, and when you have read one such letter, you've read them all, for they are all written according to a long established pattern. The factory manager will write that the dispatch printed in the paper proved to be true, and that he will certainly do everything possible to eliminate the shortcomings.

Often, however, as stated, unpleasant accidents occur. For example, a few months ago, a Moscow paper printed a small item, starting that the pavement near the Pushkin monument was badly in need of repair. The paper asked whether the Moscow Soviet was going to do anything about it. The pavement had, however, been repaired long before the item appeared in the paper. This happens often: the papers usually ask the authorities to do this or that after the wishes of the press have been fulfilled. How and why does this happen?

The answer is this: when a local authority intends to improve the schedule of trolleys, to repair a street, etc., *it must inform the Agitprop of its intentions.* The *Agitprop* thereupon instructs some newspaper to demand that such repairs be made, the idea being to create the impression that the repairs had been made *because* of these demands, or, in other words, that the press was instrumental in bringing about improvements. There are, however, so many displays of troops and so many anniversaries in the Soviet Union for the press to report that it often lacks space for the "demands" until it is a little too late.

The last page of a Soviet newspaper is usually devoted to events abroad and to critical reviews of new books, films, and theater plays. Before World War II, many papers had foreign correspondents. Some still have them but their articles rarely appear. Almost any news from *sagranitza* (foreign countries) is now considered dangerous, for it may arouse interest in what is happening outside Russia, and this is something the government fears greatly. The editors are constantly receiving new lists of items considered taboo, and most of these items are concerned with *sagranitza.* One of the latest lists included "income taxes in foreign countries." *This was probably because the Soviet Union is the only major country in the world where a worker earning* 300 *rubles a month pays his income tax at the same rate as a factory director whose earnings amount to several thousand rubles a month.*

As for the critical reviews, they are almost absolutely alike in all papers. As a rule, the papers never print any reviews until Andrei Zhdanov or some other dignitary gives his opinion about a book, a movie or a play. The safest sort of criticism is then to repeat almost verbatim the acknowledged reaction of this dignitary.

The Soviet Union has a few literary magazines of the type of *Harpers* or *Atlantic Monthly*: *Novyi Mir, Molodya Gvardia, Novoye Vremia* (*New Times*). They publish new Soviet novels, short stories and poetry, along with political articles. The most serious political magazine is *Boshevik,* the official theoretical organ of the party.

The only magazine of the type of *Life is called Ogoniok* ("The Little Flame"). In its three last consecutive issues, there are only two items concerned with foreign countries. The rest of the magazine is devoted to events in the Soviet Union. Military and sports subjects prevail. Photographs are usually very good, often excellent.

There is also one satirical magazine in the Soviet Union. It is called *Krocodil* and it has on its staff many excellent cartoonists and some good writers. But their field of action is very limited. They are encouraged to make fun of "foreign reactionaries." The only other victims of their pens and pencils are small Soviet officials. This hasn't always been so. *Krocodil* was once edited by Michael Koltsov, a gifted journalist, who at one time had been a personal friend of Stalin. This enabled him to attack in the magazine even such men as Andrei Zhdanov, whom he once made appear very foolish indeed. On another occasion, *Krocodil* ran a cartoon on all of the first page representing high mountains with glaring white snow on their peaks. Two Soviet workers stood there, and one was saying to another: "Look at the snow: how white and pure it is!" "That's because we're looking at it from below," the other replied. "It might prove to be not so white and not so clean if we looked at it from a closer distance."

Krocodil as well as *Ogoniok* published in every issue several humorous stories. Here is a typical one from *Ogoniok*:

A Soviet pianist returned from abroad and brought with him a suit of clothes. But it soon turned out that he had made a bad bargain. The suit creased all over (many drawings illustrate the story). He didn't know what to do, and he finally decided . . .

(*At this juncture it may perhaps be recalled that Chekhov once wrote a famous story about a doctor named Koshelkov who received a statuette representing nude women as a gift from one of his patients. The figurine being slightly frivolous, the doctor didn't want to keep it and he gave it to an actor. But the actor didn't like the statuette either, and so it passed through several hands, finally returning to the doctor: he again received it as a gift.*)

. . . This is exactly what happens in the *Ogoniok* story. The pianist gives the suit to a friend, the friend gives it to another man, and the suit finally returns to the Soviet pianist. The *Ogoniok* story has however a political moral. It is that only suits of very poor quality can be bought in foreign countries. And this is a very useful Soviet moral, especially at the present time when members of its forces return to Russia and tell tales not only about suits but about practically everything being better abroad than at home.

During the purge of 1936-38, almost all the editors of Moscow and

Leningrad papers, and many other well-known Soviet journalists, were "liquidated."* This accounts for the fact that there are comparatively few well known Soviet journalists in Russia today.

Perhaps the best known is *Ilya Ehrenburg.* Born in Moscow 56 years ago, he joined the revolutionary movement at an early age, but soon broke away from it, and even for a time (1921-22), while living in Berlin as an *emigré,* was known as an adversary of the Soviet regime. He wrote several novels that were translated into many languages, and also two books of poetry imbued with religious spirit (*Verses to the Madonna* and *Prayer for Russia*). His most famous novel is *The Adventures of Julio Jurenito.* He lived in Paris until the collapse of France and left in June, 1940, for Russia mainly because he feared that he would be killed by the Nazis as a Jew. The men of the Kremlin knew that, and Ehrenburg was treated rather coldly in Moscow until Hitler invaded the Soviet Union. Ehrenburg then became the most famous Soviet war reporter. He is a brilliant journalist, but, because of his past, he is not trusted too greatly and is not even a member of the Board of the Writers' Union, a large body, composed of almost all Soviet writers of repute.

David Zaslavsky, who often also writes under the pen name of *Konstantin Demidov,* is now 73. He was, up to 1921, a right-wing Menshevik. Zaslavsky is best known in this country for his bitter attacks on American "reactionaries," but his fame in Russia springs from rather different sources. When Lenin returned to Russia in 1917, Zaslavsky accused him of being a German agent and declared that he had documents in his possession which proved that Lenin was sent to Russia by German Headquarters. The Bolsheviks challenged Zaslavsky to publish these documents, but he never did. Lenin called him then "Zaslavsky, the scoundrel," and the Soviet press called him that for years afterwards. During the civil war he was in Kiev allegedly cooperating with Denikin and the "Whites." But in 1921 he suddenly changed his politics to such an extent that he was later able to become co-editor of *Pravda.* He is also co-editor of *Krocodil.*

Peter Nikolaievitch Pospelov, editor of *Pravda,* is a rather good journalist and a close friend of the almighty Andrei Zhdanov.

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* N. Bukharin, Editor of *Pravda,* N. Krumin, Editor of *Izvestia,* A. Slepkov, Editor of *Komsomolskaya Pravda,* the columnists A. Zoritch, A. Sosnovski and M. Koltsov, foreign correspondents D. Bukhartzev, A. Romm, and many others.

The actual editor of *Izvestia* is *Ilyerkov.* Its editorials and articles on foreign affairs are often written by *Prof. Boris Stein,* the former Soviet Ambassador to Italy. Stein, who for many years was the foreign editor of *Izvestia,* is handicapped in his career by the fact that he was a protegé of Litvinov. He is an excellent journalist, but being in the diplomatic service, he never signs his articles.

Less known but fairly good newspapermen are *N. A. Talensky,* editor of the Red Army daily, *The Red Star,* and *K. K. Omelchenko,* editor of the Moscow Trade Union daily, *Trud* (Labor). The Soviet press has some very fine cartoonists. One of the best is *Boris Efimov.* He is a brother of the most brilliant Soviet journalist, *Michael Koltsov.* Koltsov was in Spain during the civil war and his activities there are described at some length in Ernest Hemingway's *For Whom the Bell Tolls.* (Koltsov is Kharkoff in Hemingway's book). In his novel, Hemingway called Koltsov the most intelligent man he had ever met. Koltsov was, however, too intelligent and too brilliant for his own good, or perhaps he knew too much. He was shot immediately after his return from Spain. Boris Efimov was also arrested at that time, but was soon freed. His cartons, however, became much less daring after his release. Three young Russian painters, *Kuprianov, Krylov,* and *Sokolov,* are rightly considered the most talented cartoonists in the Soviet Union. They always work together under the collective name of Kukryniksa. They recently won the annual Stalin prize for artistic achievement.

The average Russian has no other means of learning about the U. S. except through the Soviet press. If he reads it regularly his opinion of America will run somewhat along these lines:

1. The United States is a country where "1 per cent of the reactionaries rule over the rest of the population." Herbert Hoover, President Truman, the Ku Klux Klan, Senator Vandenberg and the AFL are all "servants of American reaction, whose aim is to weaken organized labor not only in America but throughout the world" (*Pravda*).

2. The atom bomb belongs to a few American capitalists. "It is owned by Westinghouse, Du Pont, and International Radium and Uranium" (*Novoye Vremia*).

3. American journalists write their articles according to this recipe: "A little calumny, a little ignorance, a little nerve—and the

dish is ready." There are, however, some exceptions. Messrs. Henry Wallace, Johannes Steel and Senator Claude Pepper of Florida are "the real spokesmen of the American people"; they represent "genuine American public opinion." (*Pravda*).

4. The average Russian also knows of some other Americans, but probably doesn't think much of them. Bernard Baruch is nothing but "a speculator grown rich," "a war manufacturer, gardening and watering his atomic bomb." Senator Vandenberg is "a herald of reaction," Drew Pearson "a master of the art of provocation," Walter Lippmann "a faithful servant of monopolistic circles," and Brooks Atkinson "a mercenary bandit, not even fit for trash." (*Pravda*).

The Soviet press, of course, also prints some straight news about the United States, but this news is drowned in a sea of propaganda material. For example, in the first ten months of 1946, *Pravda* devoted 42,662 lines to the United States. 41,710 lines were of propaganda materia land only 952 lines straight, factual information. In ten days of June, 1947 (between June 4 and 13, inclusive), *Pravda* ran 2,598 lines of propaganda and only 353 lines of straight news concerning the United States.

Soviet newspapermen in Europe often assert, in private conversation, that propaganda about the United States preparing a war against the Soviet Union is necessary, because it serves as an incentive to make the Russians work very hard at the reconstruction of their country. The Russian correspondents occasionally add that this propaganda is designed exclusively for the Russian masses and that Soviet leaders really do not believe in it. This may be so, but one involuntarily remembers an old Russian story about a peasant who told his neighbors that a strange animal had just been found in the forest. The animal, he said, had the head of a horse, the tail of a pig, the legs of a cow and the torso of a sheep, and it spoke perfect Russian, even using strong words of a considerable variety. The news spread like a sheet of flame. The inhabitants of the village rushed to the forest and some of them soon claimed to have seen the strange thing with their own eyes.

The inventor of the tale sat watching them through the window and laughing at their gullibility. Suddenly he rose, and decided to follow them and see the animal. *"Sure I invented the whole thing,"* he said to his wife. *"But since everyone believes in it, maybe after all it is true?"* . . .

LABOR'S WINDING POLITICAL SPIRAL

Alfred Braunthal

The political trends which have become conspicuous in the American labor union movement in this election year can be described by the simile of a turn in an upward spiral which at first glance seems like a return to an earlier position, but which actually constitutes a step forward toward a higher position.

While the trend has been similar in the AFL and in the CIO, it has been complicated in the latter by the simultaneous rupture of the ties between moderates and Communists which kept that organization together since its inception. The historic events which marked this rupture were so dramatic and sensational that they diverted the attention of the public from the new political trend which simultaneously took shape within the leadership of the CIO. The new trend constitutes a change away from the broad policies based on the New Deal philosophy to narrower labor issues. The change may be one in emphasis rather than in long-range aims, but in any event it is a change in immediate political objectives.

The rupture between the CIO leadership and the Communists can be traced to the order to mobilize against the democracies which the Stalinists had received in Warsaw when the Cominform was organized. The simultaneity of the Communist attacks on the democratic regimes in France and Italy, the overthrow of democracy in Czechoslovakia, and the nomination of Wallace was too conspicuous to be viewed as coincidence. Nor was it a coincidence that the result in all instances was the same, except in Czechoslovakia where it was vitiated by the proximity of the Soviet armies. The direct attack on French democracy which the Communists launched through the weapon of the general strike induced the moderate wing in the *Confederation du Travail* to secede from that Communist-controlled body. In Italy the trade union movement has not yet officially split apart, but a movement in this direction is rapidly gaining momentum. In the CIO the nomination of Wallace has had the same cathartic effect as the general strike in France, but fortunately with the difference that in the CIO the Communists never

were the stronger partner, as they were in the CGT, and their position has been substantially weakened by their resounding rout in the Automobile Workers' Union and the crisis in the National Maritime Union.

However, analogies with events in other countries cannot by themselves explain the drastic reaction of the CIO leadership which the Stalinist nomination of Wallace provoked. After all, the armistice in the CIO between moderates and Communists had already stood a similarly severe test, that of the Hitler-Stalin pact. The anti-Stalinists in the CIO were then no less firmly in favor of moral, material, and eventually military aid to Western Europe than they are now. Nevertheless the moderates acquiesced in omitting any political action in favor of their position lest the peace within the CIO be broken. They maintained their neutral position although it meant paralyzing the CIO's political power in an election year; they maintained this position although it had become obvious that Hitler could not be dislodged from the positions he had taken in Europe without the direct or indirect participation of the United States in the war. Moreover, they maintained this position although the Communists did not keep their part of the bargain, but launched a relentless and ruthless anti-war and opposition campaign against the Roosevelt administration.

What was it then that forced the CIO leadership this time to respond to the provocation of the Communists by an open break with them, even at the risk of a disruption of the CIO? As usual, the explanation lies in the conjunction of many conditions and motives. The present tension between Soviet Russia and the Western world cannot be compared in intensity with that which characterized the period of the Hitler-Stalin pact. Soviet Russia then was a weak and only passive ally of a powerful totalitarian aggressor; it has meanwhile assumed itself the role of the powerful totalitarian aggressor. To allow the Communists, *via* the Wallace campaign, to turn the CIO into a sounding board for the world policy of Soviet Russia, for its attack on the Marshall plan, and its attempt to make Western Europe ripe for Communism through an economic collapse, would have been all but suicidal for the CIO.

There was, in addition, the difference between the election years of 1940 and 1948. The nomination of Wallace meant a much greater threat to the election of progressive Presidential and Congressional candidates than had the opposition of the Communists to the reelection of Roosevelt. But, in addition, there was another factor, completely absent

in 1940, which this time loomed particularly large in the considerations of the CIO leadership. That was their grave concern regarding the Taft-Hartley Act. An electoral victory of the Republican and non-progressive Democrats, which would be the more likely the stronger the support Wallace received within the labor movement, would mean approval by the electorate of the Taft-Hartley Act. Any hope for a repeal or substantial modification of this anti-labor law would have to be abandoned for years to come.

It is, of course, impossible to isolate combined motives. No one can answer the question of whether the CIO leadership would have ruptured its relations with the Communists at the risk of a disruption of the CIO if the nomination of Wallace had meant nothing else but the danger of perpetuation of the Taft-Hartley Act. One thing, however, can be maintained with certainty. The fight against the Taft-Harley Act is—in the eyes of the CIO leadership—by far the dominant issue of this election campaign, while the broader questions concerning the relations between government and national economy, economic and social stability, progress and full employment, play no conspicuous part in its campaign.

It is this change from long-range to short-range political aims within the leadership of the CIO with which we are mainly concerned, a change which, while obscured by the simultaneous break with the Communists, has actually a significant bearing on the general American political situation.

On the other hand, the AFL has never been as intently and consistently concerned with long-range aims. And since the Communist ties of the CIO had deepened the cleavage between the AFL and CIO, both the new political trend within the latter organization and its rupture with the Communists have brought about, in fact if not formally, a marked *rapprochement* between the two organizations. This has become obvious in the campaign against the Taft-Hartley Act. The AFL has openly made the fight against this legislation the virtually exclusive objective of its election year campaign. The CIO has not done so officially; but, as has been stated, there can be no doubt that for the CIO too the repeal of the Taft-Hartley Act has become the dominant issue.

But what, after all, is so surprising about this development? Is not the concentration of the labor movement on its fight against this vicious

anti-labor law quite natural? Is it not understandable that labor unions above all have a stake in their own existence and are intent on fighting legislation which not only means daily and oppressive annoyance and grievance for the unions and humiliating restriction of their autonomy, but also places grave obstacles in the path of organizational work? These questions must, of course, be answered in the affirmative. Although trade unionism is already too strongly entrenched in this country to be really imperiled or even seriously impeded by the new labor legislation, its sharp and implacable opposition to it must be recognized as a legitimate act of self-defense.

If that much be conceded, there still remains as extremely remarkable not the fact that the AFL and CIO have concentrated their energies on the fight against the Taft-Hartley Act, but that they have done so virtually with the exclusion of other political issues. It is this emphasis on the field of labor legislation which marks the return to the pre-New Deal period when the political interest of the labor unions was in substance confined to labor issues in a narrower sense, that is, to issues in which labor was directly interested as a party in a class conflict. This conflict appeared in the political sphere as a conflict about labor's rights.

An objection could be made to this presentation of labor's current policy that even while concentrating on the fight against the Taft-Hartley Act, unions do not neglect other issues to which they have committed themselves more and more firmly. They still fight for general democratic rights, against discrimination, and against such anti-democratic impediments as the poll tax.

In all these respects, the labor union movement of today has doubtless transcended its previous position in that its main job in the political field is that of staving off the encroachments of government on its freedom of movement in the economic class struggle. But all of these issues are not the fundamental problem for the labor movement any longer. The most fundamental problem results rather from the fact that while the economy of today is basically unstable and can in the long run maintain its stability and progress only by intelligent and coordinated governmental action, government is not yet geared to this function and there is no general psychological and political readiness to adjust government to this role. Under this basic contradiction in the structure of contemporary American society the working class is in the long run bound to suffer more severely than most other classes.

Yet it so happens, as a result of the coinciding of a number of conditions which need not be analyzed here, that this basic momentum towards economic and social instability in American society is at the present moment not really gravely felt. It is this momentary breathing spell that has allowed the labor union movement to concentrate virtually exclusively on the issue of labor's rights in which it has just now a huge stake.

But if this trend within the labor union movement justifies one to speak of a return to a previous position, is it more than wishful thinking to use the simile of a spiral and to imply that the retrograde movement is only apparent but is actually a recoil in preparation for a new forward movement? Are there any objective indications of a broadening trend in the scope of the labor movement? For the attentive observer of the labor scene, it is not difficult to discern such symptoms.

There is, first of all, the very fact of the power and energy with which the union movement has learned to pursue its political goals, whatever they are at any given moment. Both the AFL and the CIO have thrown themselves into the current election campaign with a tremendous impetus. Certainly, it is in the traditional field of labor's rights in which they display this high degree of political activity. Yet the fact that they are so eager to conduct a poltical fight with their entire power bears witness to a political vigor previously unknown.

Second, there is in today's American labor movement a new, strong feeling of the highest responsibility for the preservation and development of democracy, economic stability, and social progress everywhere in the world. The fact that this country has become the leading power in the democratic sector of the world, saddled with the gigantic responsibility of protecting it from the onslaught of totalitarian aggression, has been reflected in new vistas for the American labor-movement. Who would, for example, have dared some twelve years ago, when the AFL still kept aloof from the International Federation of Trade Unions, to predict that this organization would have its roving ambassadors in all European countries outside of the Iron Curtain? Similarly, the split in the CIO was aggravated, if not caused, by the fact that the CIO leadership was firmly on the side of the democratic forces in the European labor movement and determined not to yield to the furious Stalinist opposition to the Marshall plan, both domestically in the ranks of the CIO itself and within the World Federation of Trade Unions.

Last, the concern of the labor movement for economic stability and progress, although it is not fully vocal at the present moment and not raised to the rank of a fundamental electoral issue, is latent all the time and breaks through whenever trends toward a serious disruption of economic equilibrium develop. This has been evidenced by the position the unions have taken regarding the problems of inflation and taxation.

It is true that these trends at the present moment are not sufficiently powerful to induce the labor movement to embark on political activities beyond the narrow confines of labor's rights. But all indications are that this is but a transitional situation which may change rapidly. The precarious equilibrium between inflationary and deflationary forces which exists at present is not likely to last long.

The American labor union movement is in its core pragmatic rather than programmatic. It does not care to worry too much about the problem of how to cross a bridge before approaching it. But in its pragmatic way, American labor is well-equipped and prepared for vigorous political activity, should that be needed to cope with economic and social problems which cannot be solved any longer by reliance on economic automatism and occasional, sporadic government action. The equipment of the labor movement for political activity is better today than ever before. This is true not only of its numerical strength. Its inner strength and cohesion has also been materially increased by the inner political purge through which the CIO is going.

By fighting for labor's rights and for social progress, the labor unions in this election campaign will certainly contribute their share in strengthening politically progressive forces. But labor's hour of political activity along the entire front has not yet struck. It is gathering its strength, it is closing its ranks. But it is not yet approaching the bridge which sooner or later it will have to cross.

THE VORKUTA MASSACRE

Ivan Ivanov

In the deportation cell of the Butyrky prison no one knew anything specific about Vorkuta. Even the old inmates did not know exactly where this Vorkuta was situated. The fact that it was somewhere beyond the Arctic Circle seemed, however, encouraging; in the Arctic camps the food was said to be better, the prisoners were given alcohol against scurvy, and sentence calculation was more favorable. If the work quota was 100 per cent fulfilled, one month was reckoned as three.

We were brought to Archangel, surrounded with bloodhounds and sent on to the deportation center. After our long imprisonment in Butyrky, we impatiently awaited the departure to the camp. The administration had told us that every man would be assigned to work at his specialty or trade and allowed to send his "wages" home to his family. But experienced prisoners were skeptical.

About twenty of the Trotskyites who had been added to our group after completing their terms in the "political isolators," refused to go to the camp, demanded to be returned to the political prison and declared a hunger strike. The hunger strikers included one anarchist, who struck for special reasons of his own; his wife had died while he was imprisoned, leaving a small son. When he was still in the political prison, he declared a hunger strike, demanding that his son be allowed to join him. He was promised that his demand would be granted if he agreed to go to the camp, and he "voluntarily" consented to the transfer. On arrival at the deportation center in Archangel, however, he realized that he had been tricked, that his son was not there and would not come. He, therefore, again went on a hunger strike.

In the middle of August, 1936, a party of approximately 350 prisoners was brought to the harbor and herded into the hold of a specially equipped ship. The hunger strikers came in horse-drawn carts, bound hand and foot, and were thus lowered into the hold. Here, their comrades untied them and a doctor, also a prisoner, gave them first aid and bandaged their bleeding bruises.

We were at sea for four days, traveling from Archangel to Naryan-Mara (at the mouth of the Pechora River). In Naryan-Mara we were transferred to a river boat, and a week later we arrived in Ust-Usa, where we changed again, this time to a barge pulled by a tug-boat. After another 800 kilometers, we reached Ust-Vorkuta. The barge trip was extremely difficult; we were cold, we received no hot food, and drew our drinking water directly from the river. At the end of our journey, we began to feel the approach of winter. It was snowing, and the river was encrusted with a thin layer of ice. We came to Vorkuta on September 30.*

On arrival in Vorkuta the new prisoners found that reality was even worse than the Archangel pessimists had predicted. Food was meager and monotonous, the conditions of work extremely difficult, and the work itself often beyond the limits of our strength. The whole environment and especially the utter hopelessness of camp existence again brought the prisoners to the idea of a hunger strike.

About four hundred of the involuntary inhabitants of Vorkuta came there directly from political prisons, to serve new five-year terms after the expiration of their "polit-isolator" sentences. This group consisted of Trotskyites, "Democratic Centralists," and "Stalinists" guilty of some offense. There were no Social Democrats or Social Revolutionaries—these were kept in political prisons. The Trotskyites were removed from the polit-isolators in great numbers to make place for other prisoners arrested in connection with the new trials. This was not only the first but last attempt to transfer prisoners from polit-isolators to camps. This was due to the hunger strike that broke out in the camp among the "politicals."

The hunger strike began in the latter days of October, 1936. Of the 3,500 political and criminal prisoners spread over the Vorkuta region, several groups, totalling about 340 persons, went on strike. The Trotskyites, who were the instigators of the strike, submitted a long declaration to the authorities, protesting against the recent trial (of Zinoviev, Kamenev and others) and characterizing it as the begin-

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** Our anarchist continued his hunger strike; he was carried from the barge in Ust-Vorkuta and taken to a "san-city" (hospital center), where he lived for a year, subjected to artificial feeding and persistently refusing to end the hunger strike, until his death in the autumn of 1937.*

ning of the "Thermidorean" reaction and terror against the "Leninist Bolsheviks." Another statement was submitted by a large mixed group. There were also individual declarations. The basic demand was—liberation or return to polit-isolators.

Only political prisoners struck. The criminals, who were at first hostile towards the politicals, abruptly changed their attitude as soon as the hunger strike began. They secretly brought the strikers tasty morsels and were offended when the latter refused their gifts, as if to say: *"I stole for you, I stole from the authorities, and you refuse."* The barracks were full of talk about the hunger strike; the strikers were treated like men condemned to death.

The administration began to transfer the hunger strikers from the barracks, concentrating them in special quarters. There was a wave of mass refusals to work on the part of non-strikers as well, initiated by the criminals under various pretexts, and often without any pretext. A week later the camp authorities began to remove the hunger strikers from "industrial assignments" and to isolate them completely from the rest of the camp inmates. Individual hunger strikers appeared here and there among the criminals.

The hunger strikers were taken from the Vorkuta mines to the tundra, some fifty kilometers away, to abandoned coal mines on the Syr-Yaga (a tributary of the Vorkuta River). They were lodged in tents and dugouts. The roofs of such dugouts are made of shabby, torn canvas. Inside, they are furnished with an iron stove and wooden cots of rough thin boards laid across logs of wood dug into the earth. There are no mattresses or blankets. Each cot serves as a bed for two persons. The hunger itself is not painful—the feeling of hunger disappears very quickly. But we suffer extremely from the cold. We lie down three to a cot; the place in the middle is warmer and we alternate often, warming each other. Our entire occupation is to lie and warm one another. There is no desire to talk. Our mouths are dry. The thirst is tormenting.

Every day a doctor comes, attended by orderlies and armed guards. The doctor feels every man's pulse, deciding who is to be placed on artificial feeding. Then the orderlies hold the person to be fed by the arms, legs and head; one of them opens the mouth with special tongs, the doctor inserts a rubber tube with a funnel at one end into the mouth, and an orderly pours 200 grams of sweetened milk into the

funnel. The victim tries to spit the milk out, the doctor pushes the tube deeper, the milk spills over the chest and the victim feels still colder in his wet clothes. All this is very painful. The armed guards intervene only when the other hunger strikers attempt to interfere with the artificial feeding of their comrade.

Artificial feeding is administered to prisoners who are greatly weakened—after 12, 15 or 20 days of hunger, and sometimes even more. The doctor does not know when a man began his hunger strike, and prescribes artificial feeding according to the condition of his heart.

November goes by. The doctor can no longer cope wtih his job—everyone must now be fed. All the prisoners lie flat on their backs, weakened not only by hunger, but by the unendurable cold. It is decided to continue the hunger strike, *i.e.*, refuse to voluntarily accept food (sweet milk), but to offer no resistance. Now the doctor no longer feeds the strikers through the pipe, but pours the milk directly into their mouths from a special milk jug with a spout. The weakest are fed twice daily. This is, in effect, not a hunger strike any longer. Gradually it peters out altogether. The most stubborn strikers hold out until the end of February and even to the beginning of March, 1937. During the strike there were several attempts at suicide. Trotsky's second son, Sergei Sedov, who also participated in the hunger strike, was secretly taken away and later there were rumors that he had been killed.

In the autumn of 1937—a year after the beginning of the hunger strike—the authorities began to summon prisoners for interrogation by the "Third Section" of the OGPU, accusing them of various offenses but releasing them without arrest. Among those interrogated were people with old "sins" of five years' standing (such as "certain little conversations" during their imprisonment in Butyrky while under investigation, which even the accused themselves no longer remembered). There were also charges involving camp affairs—conversations, remarks during the reading of newspapers, etc. Prisoners who had unsuccessfully tried to escape, and criminals caught in theft at the camp were also among those questioned.

Later that same autumn the persons called for interrogation began to be placed under arrest and sent to the former brick factory. This factory was situated 15 kilometers from Vorkuta, 2 or 3 kilometers from the narrow-gauge railroad that ran from Vorkuta to Ust-Vorkuta and the harbor. It had long been inactive, since it proved cheaper to

bring brick from thousands of kilometers away than to produce it locally. There were rumors that the factory was to be reopened, and that conditions there would be far better than those in the mines. Many of the prisoners begged to be assigned there.

In December, 1937, a plane landed in Vorkuta, bringing a number of important officials of the OGPU. It soon became known that the officials would remain for some time. That indicated a thorough investigation. The camp inmates hoped for improvements in their situation. Simultaneously, a military ski detachment from Obdorsk passed through the camp on the way to the brick factory. The transfers to the factory became more numerous.

One large barrack was transformed into a prison. The school was discontinued. The building was occupied by the newly-arrived commission, which lived and "worked" there. Men brought from the brick factory were placed in the new prison, and from there were taken to the schoolhouse for questioning. Heart-rending cries were heard from the schoolhouse. A man with frozen feet was brought to the infirmary from the prison: he had spent three days in the punishment cell. The cell, of course, was not heated despite the terrible cold of the Vorkuta frosts. Permission was denied to send the sick man to a surgeon for an operation, and his legs were amputated by a local physician, a specialist in tuberculosis. The patient was lucky to die in the infirmary rather than in the prison. His entire body was bruised and black from beatings, but he said nothing about it to anyone, as he said nothing about the brick factory and the "interrogations."

In March, the first rays of the sun began to appear in Vorkuta. But at the same time wild snow storms broke out making it impossible to see one step ahead. All arrivals and movements of prisoners are interrupted. On one such stormy night the authorities ordered all horses and sleighs to be sent to the brick factory. After twenty-four hours they returned, but the sleighs were completely covered with blood. It was necessary to clear away the frozen blood with knives and axes. A day later the camp radio announced (this announcement was repeated several times) that, by decision of the OGPU, forty-seven ringleaders guilty of organizing "counter-revolutionary sabotage" ("hunger strike" was not mentioned), "and escapes from the camp, as well as refusals to work, camp banditism," etc., had been shot. The forty-seven were listed by name; they included several women. This was the first

and last public announcement regarding the execution at the brick factory.

The horses were taken many more times, but the sleighs returned clean. However, alarming symptoms continued; the questioning and torture at the schoolhouse did not cease. Sometimes we saw the glow of fire from the direction of the brick factory. Sometimes we heard dull explosions. All who remained at the camp lived in a state of deep depression and anxiety; no one was certain of what the next day would bring. It seemed impossible to detect any rules or reasons governing the selection of those who were taken to the brick factory.

At the end of April, 1938, happy news spread over the camp. The commission had left. The school again became a school. Seventy persons were brought back from the brick factory. The portrait of Yezhov (chief of the OGPU) was removed from the wall in the club-room.

In May the sun is already high. The snow begins to thaw, the snow-storm is over. The narrow-gauge railroad is cleared of snow to make possible the delivery of the winter-mined coal to the harbor for the coming ships. The clearing work is carried along the 15th kilometer as well, near the brick factory. Here, a small distance from the rail line, there is a yellow, burnt-over area. Throughout it are scattered half-melted metal buttons, hooks and clothing, spoons, knives made of tin-cans, charred bits of paper. Near the station building several naked corpses are uncovered in the snow. In the distance looms the brick factory, but it holds no living soul. It is empty and abandoned, as it was before 1937. Camp inmates, whether political or criminal, who have managed to survive their terms and are going home, remove their hats despite the presence of officials when they ride past the 15th kilometer and remain bareheaded until the brick factory disappears from sight.

It was not until somewhat later that we learned what had actually taken place at the factory from eyewitnesses (from among the seventy survivors) and a member of the administration. One thousand three hundred persons lost their lives there, including the entire "service personnel" of the Commission—laundry workers, cooks, barbers, etc. The spies who had been planted among the prisoners were also shot to the last man. The execution of the first forty-seven victims was announced to us over the radio, but the prisoners at the brick factory knew nothing

about it. In March, 1938, they began to be called out in groups of 150-200, and sent on, with all their scanty belongings and without the usual search, allegedly for transfer to a new "asignment." Every party included a number of women (political prisoners). Under armed guard, the prisoners were led towards the railroad. There they were met by the soldiers from Obdorsk, ordered to place their things into a common pile, and led away under reinforced guard further along the well-trampled road into the tundra. The tundra in this region is rocky, mountainous, forming a part of the Ural chain. The executions took place in the passes. The blasts we heard in Vorkuta were the explosions of rock to bury the corpses. Apparently, the shootings were carried out in various places. In the following years the native hunters who supplied skins to the local trading post reported a considerable increase in the number of foxes in the tundra. The 1,300 human corpses under the fragments of rock and stone provided the animals with ample food. . . .

The first forty-seven were dealt with in more thorough fashion. They were brought to the station building, ordered to strip naked and led out through another door, ostensibly to be taken to the bath-house. They ran across the yard to another hut, where they were shot one by one, and their corpses were carted away into the tundra (hence the blood on the sleighs which later returned to Vorkuta.)

The mass executions in the spring of 1938 were by no means a local phenomenon. They took place in Usa as well, and in Chibiu, the center of the Pechora camp. I do not know the number of victims there. Mass executions were also carried out in district prisons. Thus, in the Cherdyn prison there were about 500 inmates; after the purge, the survivors were sent to the camp—there were only several dozen of them. A great number of people, too, perished in the camps for the "Ch.S.V.N." (Russian initials for "Members of Families of Enemies of the People.") I know nothing concerning executions in political prisons. Many of the persons living in so-called "voluntary exile' were also exterminated at that time. These, however, were usually imprisoned before execution.

million of so-called "repressed persons," including those living in "voluntary exile." "Liberal" times came to Vorkuta. Now prisoners were

Yezhov disappeared. Beria took his place. Incidentally, authoritative sources indicate that Yezhov's legacy to Beria comprised fourteen

no longer shot *en masse,* without questioning or trial, but were handled almost according to the full rules of the criminal prosecution code. A camp tribunal arrived. The seventy persons who survived the brick factory ordeal were tried in the closed sessions. In the morning they were led out, taken across the camp and beyond the guard-towers, where they, too, were shot.

In the club the remaining evangelists—"little crosses"—were tried publicity. They were the surviving seven of the thirty or forty sent here some four years earlier. All these years they had refused not only to work, but even to accept bread coupons bearing the "seal of Antichrist." They accepted bread and food only from the hands of other inmates, and spent much time in punitive cells where bread is issued without coupons in rations of 200 grams daily. Many had lain in the infirmary, recuperating, and never refusing to work as helpers to the orderlies, stove tenders, etc. It would not have taken long for the remaining few to die of exhaustion and pellagra—the camp's "occupational disease." But the authorities could not wait. The camp trimunal sentenced the last seven "little crosses" to death by shooting—*"for counter-revolutionary sabotage and refusal to work. . . ."*

Editors' Note: *Another former Vorkuta inmate, at present a DP, supplies the following additional facts:*

The political prisoners at Vorkuta at that time included a number of foreign Communists as well. Thaelmann's personal secretary who had escaped from a German concentration camp and made his way to the Soviet Union was deported to Vorkuta and shot in 1938. *Andreychin, the representative of the Communist Party of the United States at the Comintern, who had been sentenced to a fifteen-year term in Boston in* 1918 *and had later escaped to Soviet Russia, was sent to Vorkuta as a "Trotskyite." In* 1938, *he was taken back to Moscow for "reinvestigation." The "Investigation Commission" described in this report was headed by the "famous" NKVD-lieutenant Kashketin. According to reliable reports, Kashketin and his aides, who returned to Moscow after the fall and execution of their former chief Yezhov, were arrested, and reportedly executed by Beria, the new chief of the NKVD.*

"SLAVERY": ANCIENT AND MODERN

Paul Keri

I protest against giving the name of "slave labor" to all those millions of people expelled from life, to all those damned souls who are compelled to work themselves to death in Soviet concentration and forced labor camps.

A slave was valuable. After the inhuman procedure of transforming a human being into a slave, after his capture in a war or his abduction from his family, after his transportation—after all this a slave became an object of value. His value, which was variable, was often very high. In the Roman Empire when slaves were bought only from poor families in Asia Minor or raised in special slave families, young luxury slaves and house slaves who were well educated and well trained in special fields of knowledge and skills were the most important asset in the houses of the wealthy. Jewels, expensive clothes were less important in the luxurious life of ancient Rome, furniture made of valuable wood and objects of art were more important but the most important and the most valuable assets were beautiful or intelligent male and female slaves. Such individuals were precious, indeed, and were treated accordingly. How then can one refer to the condemned in the Russian camps as the namesakes of the "slaves" in ancient Rome?

The major part of the "ancient" slaves were laborers. The slaves on the estates of the rich—mostly wine and olive growers—led a rather easy life. The working day in the Roman Empire consisted of six to seven hours in the cities for the free as well as for the slaves; in the country the length of the working day depended on the season. The slave farmers enjoyed a certain collective freedom under their overseers in the "villa," on the estate. The *coloni,* which represented the economic foundation of feudal development in the Middle Ages, can be traced back to this social group. There also existed hard and unpleasant work, particularly in the mines. For purposes of punishment,

slaves were sometimes sold to the mine owners, as were people sentenced to forced labor—for example, Christians who were sent to work in the mines. However, life in those mines must not have been too unbearable because a large part of the miners were free workers who toiled side by side with the slaves and did the same kinds of work. The slave laborer possessed economic value and was by no means expendable. He was well fed, and in the "villas" there were special bathrooms for the slaves. In the gladiator schools the slaves were fed according to scientific methods.

Of course, there existed a specific discipline, specific rules and regulations, for the slaves. When he rebelled, he no longer was valuable and could be destroyed. But even the slave revolts in the period preceding the rise of the Roman Empire demonstrate that slaves were able to muster sufficient strength for an open revolt. *Can the millions in the labor camps of the Soviet Union even dream of revolting against their torturers?*

Of one thing, however high his market value, the slave was deprived: of human dignity. According to the old Roman law, the *jus civile,* he was a *res,* a thing, and in the Roman Republic there existed in agriculture the term of "talking inventory" (the slaves), and of "dumb inventory" (the cattle.) In the course of time, however, there occurred a thorough modification of this attitude. Not the old Roman law but the "natural law" of the Stoics dominated the thinking of that period, according to which even a slave existed as a human being. Imperial edicts endeavored to protect slaves against the cruel despotism of their masters. The distinction between the slave and free man eventually became a rather formal one: the genuine difference was between the respected and wealthy and the poor. These were the actual class distinctions under the laws of the ancient Roman society at the height of its power and civilization. But would anyone believe that the Soviet jurists, statesmen, rulers, are guided by any kind of "natural law" in the treatment of their "slaves"?

During the Middle Ages, until the end of the 13th century, a major part of the servants were also slaves and the slave trade flourished. But only few were slave laborers. It was much cheaper to utilize serf labor. A male or female slave was an expensive luxury. Characteristic of medieval slavery was the rise of the Mameluke economy in the Egyptian Sultanate. Having had unsatisfactory experiences

with mercenaries, mainly Negroes, the Egyptian government bought thousands of young boys, Turks, Mongols and also large numbers of European Christians, who were developed by consumate indoctrination into fanatic Moslems and good soldiers. When promoted to the rank of officer, they were awarded freedom, nobility, wealth and gradually attained considerable power. Even when the Mamelukes—in Arabic: slaves—were already on the throne, new recruits for the army were still obtained by the purchase of young slaves; *the slave, so to speak, carried the crown in his knapsack.*

Of course, murder, exploitation, arbitrary and inhuman treatment were things which a slave had to suffer. But in those times life was cheap even in the upper classes; one lived "dangerously" whether or not one liked it. A slave was certainly more exposed to all kinds of dangers than was his master. But, on the other hand, he enjoyed a certain protection: namely his value in good hard money. He was not condemned to certain death as are the valueless inmates of the Soviet camps. Even the life of a Negro slave in the United States—whose position was bound to be worse than that of all earlier slaves because of his color—must have been endurable once he was settled on an estate. It was common in the 'forties and 'fifties for a landowner to invest one thousand dollars in a good Negro slave. He had therefore good reason to protect his investment as long as his slave was willing to work.

Who then are these "damned of this earth" in the Soviet camps if they are not slaves? On occasion, they are referred as "forced labor." Yet this description is even less adequate, for it does not distinguish between those millions of victims who will be crushed to death under their unbearable yoke of work and the rest of the toilers in the Soviet Union. This is so, for in a totalitarian state each activity is subjected to compulsion. Any labor in the Soviet Union is "forced labor," not only that in the death camps. The only difference is that the other workers represent a certain "value" for the state and its rulers. But that part of manpower which has been expelled from humanity, this "scum labor"—at least one out of every twenty souls in the vast Soviet area—is destined for extermination, because they can serve no other purpose. However, the Soviet regime reasons, why not take advantage of this additional manpower as long as these persons are still alive?

There is a certain resemblance between the millions of unfortunate people who in a totalitarian state have been excluded from society

and imprisoned in camps and the "accursed races" of the Middle Ages. Originally the latter may have been suspected of leprosy, a widely spread and much feared disease of that time. Later the reason for their expulsion came to be almost forgotten; however, they remained isolated, despised, proscribed social groups. The totalitarian state excludes groups of people, whom it considers a threat to its "principles," they are the new "leper-suspects." At first, they were the social and religious opponents who seemed "incorrigible," later other *untermenschen* were added—Jews, Poles, Russians, gypsies. In the Soviet Union, the *Untermenschen* were all those who were opposed, or suspected of being opposed, to the regime: the Kulaks, the discontented, Trotskyites, prisoners of war, scholars, foreigners, embezzlers or just economically unreliable elements, tramps, in certain cases even whole tribes.

In both instances, with the medieval *Cagots* and contemporary camp inmates of totalitarianism—the fear and abhorrence of the "strange," the different inherent in man has been exploited to serve the purpose of creating an almost sadistic hatred against the expelled and thus providing an outlet for latent discontent. While in the Middle Ages these outcasts, once excluded from the community, were more or less left alone, the capitalist era dealt quite differently with the present-day *Cagots*. Our era is based on hired labor, but the totalitarians soon discovered a splendid opportunity to take advantage of unpaid labor. The millions of outcasts are already condemned to extermination. Until they die, however, why not exploit the strength of their bodies? This labor will be furnished only for a limited span of time; it is not very efficient but it is virtually free of charge. A state controlled economy is not concerned with the welfare of these millions of camp inmates; they are so easy to replace. All one has to do is to brand some additional numbers of people as unreliable, *Untermenschen, Cagots.*

As far as the medieval *Cagots* were concerned, the original reason for their isolation gradually was forgotten. Though they remained outcasts for a long period of time, this social isolation eventually ceased, because there was no economic need to prolong this situation. As regards the modern *Cagots,* however, the original purpose, namely the isolation of dangerous elements, has been relegated to a secondary place of importance, whereas the economic factor has assumed a paramount importance and has now befcome the main purpose: namely the supply of almost unpaid labor for the state. This is in addition to

the other quite important purpose of making totalitarian terror even more effective through large-scale social brutality.

If we analyze this method of securing labor at almost no cost, we find that this is possible only in our time, and in a society in which hired labor has become the generally accepted form of labor and in which labor has become an independent factor, separated from the working man, and purchased as such. If, however, in a society based on the capitalist system of hired labor (*Lohnarbeit*), the freedom of the human being is totally eliminated, then hired labor becomes a curse. The concept of hired labor is based on the freedom of the human being, and cannot be separated from it. Even though Marx, one hundred years ago, may have referred with grim irony to the "liberation" of man, it is nevertheless true that the free laborer, taking advantage of his personal freedom in a capitalist society, could protect his labor power and thus his own person. Without freedom he is bound to be worse off than a slave or a serf.

The totalitarians have taken advantage of the fact that in the bourgeois organization of labor, "labor," the product of work, and "laborer," the source of labor supply, have become two different things. They have deprived man of freedom, but they have maintained the use of manpower. It is a simple matter of calculation how large the number of those condemned to death by labor can be without serious prejudice to the economic structure of the country.

THE WORLD LABOR FORCE

Labor Participation in Management

One of the signs of labor's "coming of age" has been its demand to sit at the table when and where policy is made and decisions taken. The war and its aftermath have weakened opposition to this idea considerably; during the war, in fact, government sought labor participation in management in order to increase production. This is particularly true of the British Commonwealth and the United States. Since the end of hostilities, labor has sought rationalization or legalization of its role as partner of management with either the acquiescence or the active support of government. This process has been most developed in Europe. This survey will be limited to Western Europe since the efficacy of such projects is best examined and judged under systems of political freedom.

In general, labor participation in management is most encouraged by trade union leaders and by government. Both management and labor rank-and-file are slow to accept this new development. Management, of course, resents any "encroachment" on what it considers its exclusive functions and also does not always believe that workers possess sufficient technical knowledge to be able to contribute production ideas. The worker, on the other hand, needs reassurance that increased production will not only be means for profits for management, and there is the fear that such "cooperation" with management might lead to loss of hard won gains.

UNITED KINGDOM. The Labor Government has, of course, encouraged the spread of worker-management cooperation. The National production Advisory Board with its Regional Boards have been reconstituted, the National Joint Advisory Council has been re-established under the Ministry of Labor and the Economic Planning Board has been created as part of the Exchequer. The National Joint Advisory Council is headed by the Minister of Labor and is composed of seventeen representatives of the British Employers Confederation and seventeen of the Trades Union Congress. The Council studies the problems of industrial relations as a whole and with regard to their effect on the general economy, particularly on such matters as increased production. It then advises the government of its findings, as it did in the White Paper of January, 1947. This Paper established a system of tri-partite National, Regional and District Councils whose function it is to advise the Government on industrial conditions and on the best utilization of human and material resources. These Councils are also to inform industry of government policy.

Another part of this plan is contained in the Industrial Organization and Development Act of 1947 which empowers any one of the eight government departments to establish a Development Council in a given industry after consultation with the representatives of the workers and employers organizations. Each council is to include members of both workers and employers and will be independent of the government. The pattern was established by the Engineering Advisory Council which was created in February, 1947. (Engineering includes mechanical, electrical and radio with ship-building under the jurisdiction of the Iron and Steel Board). The Council consists of twenty-two members representing labor and management under the chairmanship of the Minister of Supply. It concerns itself with all matters, except wages and conditions, affecting general policy as well as such aspects of the industry as mining and agricultural machinery. It also concerns itself with the supply of raw materials and exports in so far as these matters bear upon government policy on engineering.

The first Development Council to be established under the new law was that of the cotton industry in January, 1948. There is a Cotton Board of eleven members—four for the employers, four for the employees and three for the public. The four employers' representatives will be divided into one for the spinners and doublers, another for the weavers, a third for the finishers and a fourth for the converters. Labor representation is as follows: two for those employed in spinning and doubling, one for the weavers and one for those employed in the finishing section. The Board's principal function is to promote the efficiency and productivity of the industry by all appropriate means—research, training of personnel, development of new marketing and merchandising techniques. It derives its income from a levy on industry, the rates determined by mule spindles, ring spindles and spindles used by waste spinning, rather than on the weight of the raw cotton used. However, no more than $1,000,000 per year may be collected for this purpose. Other industries have been slower to establish Development Councils, principally because of the opposition of the employers' associations.

There is, naturally, adequate trade union representation on the managing boards of the nationalized industries. The biggest gap in the United Kingdom as regards labor participation in management is on the individual plant and workshop level. This signifies considerable extension of the Point Production Committees, and much more efficient flow of information from the rank and file worker to the managing board and return. The success or failure of the experiment will finally depend on the ability of the individuals concerned to overcome their distrust or apathy and work together.

FRANCE. Liberation in France gave great impetus to labor participation in management. Works Committees were created by the Ordinance of February 22, 1945, as amended by the Law of August 13, 1946. They can be organized in any plant with more than fifty employees, have a controlling voice in the social services furnished by the plant and are con-

sulted on economic and financial policy. Like the British Development Councils, they are supposed to help increase productivity and efficiency. The Works Committee may examine the books, a provision which has provoked much protest from employers. The Committees, however, must be informed of the yearly profits and may make suggestions as to their use. The opinion of the Works Committees is submitted at the stockholders' meeting, along with the director's report. The employers have also feared the unveiling of production secrets by worker-members of the boards as a result of such provisions.

The Ordinance of February 23, 1945, provides for a Higher Commission of Works Committees attached to the Ministry of Labor and Social Security to assist in making the Works Committees effective. Both labor and management are represented on this Commission. The Law of May 16, 1946, made Works Committees compulsory in all industrial and commercial establishments, government offices, the liberal professions, trade unions and other associations where more than fifty persons are regularly employed. In smaller enterprises, most of the functions of the Works Committees are performed by the Staff Delegates elected by the workers from lists prepared by the trade unions. The Staff Delegates were created by the first Popular Front government in 1936.

The Works Committee studies suggestions from management or labor for increased and/or better production, and proposes those ideas which seem practicable. The Committee may propose awards to those workers whose ideas are valuable. The management must inform the Committee, at its next monthly meeting, of the action taken on suggestions made at the previous meeting. If a rejected suggestion is proposed again, after a due interval of time, the Committee may refer the matter to the Inspector-General of Industrial Production. He may, in turn, forward the suggestion to the Joint Advisory Council for the branch of the industry concerned. The Committee must be informed and consulted on all questions of organization, management and general operation of the enterprise. It must also receive an annual report from management on activities of the past year and plans for the next. In nationalized factories, the Works Committees are called Productive Committees.

These have largely been under Communist control since they were created while the Communist Marcel Paul was Minister of Industrial Production. The Works Committees have had not only to fight employer opposition but also, and more seriously, labor disinterest and distrust. Labor leaders, socialists and others interested in making the Works Committees successful have concluded that the urgent need now is an intensive and widespread program of workers' education.

The intermediary body between the Works Committee and the National Economic Council is the Joint Advisory Committee. However, the Act establishing the National Economic Council envisages the possibility of the Council forming separate committees of its members to replace or co-ordinate the functions of the Joint Advisory Committees. A network

of Joint Advisory Committees was created by the Ministerial Orders of November 30, 1945 and March 27, 1946, and attached to each branch of the Ministry of Industrial Production. The Committees are composed of equal numbers of representatives of (a) employers, (b) engineers, technicians and supervisory staff, and (c) salaried employees and workers. As long as the present shortages last, the Joint Advisory Committees are to be consulted as regards price-fixing, raw material quotas and production. The Committees and the trade associations concerned are consulted in the drawing-up of production schedules. The Monnet Plan (for the Industrial Reequipment of France) provides for the creation of a Planning Council with tripartite Modernization Committees.

The idea of a consultative National Economic Council dates from before the war. It is now part of the new Constitution. Its function is to study, in an advisory capacity, the proposed laws and bills submitted to it by the National Assembly. It may be consulted by the Cabinet. Although advisory, its powers are rather extensive: it had to be consulted in the writing of the Monnet Plan. It must be consulted on regulations executing Acts which have previously been submitted to it; it is also empowered to study bills and draft legislation on economic and social affairs, except for the budget and international agreements. A Permanent Council for Industrial Production was created in 1945 in order to suggest production and distribution policy with special emphasis on industrial production. Representatives of employers and technicians, higher executives, workers and salaried employees sit on the Council.

BENELUX. Labor participation, as regards increased productivity and efficiency, is not as far advanced in the Benelux countries where labor has concentrated on wages, prices, social welfare and vocational training However, the Belgian Parliament is now considering a plan submitted by the present government to give labor a voice in production as well as social welfare. This bill would transform the whole present structure for labor-management cooperation. Until this bill passes, the National Labor Conference, a tri-partite advisory organization, discusses wages and prices only.

A National Economic Conference was called in March, 1947, to discuss economic policy in general. Both labor and management representatives accepted the government proposals to create a National Economic Council at the national level, Economics Councils at the industrial level and Works Committees at the plant level. A temporary Economic Coordinating Committee was established pending permanent legislation. This Committee is composed of representatives of management and labor and is to concern itself with wages, prices and production.

These proposals were embodied in the bill which was presented to the Chamber by the government at the beginning of December, 1947. The proposed Central Economic Council will be formed by members appointed by the Executive and also by appointments from the professional organizations and technicians. Though the Central Economic Council is attached to the Ministry of Economic Affairs, it is a public institution

independent of the government. Its function is to inform and advise the government and Parliament on all economic matters and to make known the various viewpoints of the interested parties on such matters.

The next breakdown proposed is that of the Economic Councils. These are to be established in each branch of the economy, where they serve the same function as does the Central Economic Council for the general economy. They are composed of an equal number of delegates from worker and management organizations, including commercial, agricultural, as well as all kinds of industrial groups. The heart of this network is the Works Council whose aim it is to bring the workers into the management of the plant by appraising the possibility and desirability of changing production methods, sharing in the decisions regarding the management of social services. The Works Council will also be consulted in relations between the workers and management. In order to share in the control of the general running of the plant, the Council will be given the necessary information by management once every three months. As in France, the Works Council will be able to examine the books. Finally, the Joint Council will be formed from equal representation of the national organizations of employers and workers. This Council will clarify and assist the government and parliament in the execution of social legislation. The Joint General Council, however, will not concern itself at all with arbitration and conciliation, which remain the function of the forty Joint National Commissions.

In Luxembourg, a tripartite National Labor Conference was created immediately after Liberation to assist the government in the execution of social measures, to advise on social reconstruction, to study economic development, etc. In the Netherlands, too, the Foundation of Labor was created immediately after Liberation, in May, 1945. Equal numbers of employers and workers organizations cooperate at meetings usually presided over by the Under-Secretary of State for Labor. The Foundation created Trade Councils for each branch of industry, in which workers and employers are also equally represented. Although it is not an official institution, the government has come to regard the Foundation as an advisory council on social affairs and consults it regularly on wage questions. The Foundation also works to promote good industrial relations by the suggestion of legislation, conciliation and social services. Joint Works Committees were established in October, 1945, for all plants employing more than twenty-five people but they are principally concerned with moral, material and safety measures rather than with production.

SCANDINAVIA. The Scandinavian countries have found a voluntary system of labor-management cooperation to be most effective. The machinery is least rationalized in Denmark where, on the national level, it is governmental practice to consult both employer and labor representatives in preparing legislation for a given industry. Both these groups cooperate directly with each other in the execution of social and industrial legislation. On the plant level, the shop steward system, which has been

operating successfully since the turn of the century, assumes some of the functions of industrial councils though they do not concern themselves with production.

In Sweden, on August 30, 1946, the Employers Association and the Trades Union Federation signed an agreement providing for the establishment of works councils in all plants employing more than twenty-five persons and upon the consent of both labor and management. The workers are represented by up to seven delegates and management may have an equal number. Only workers who are trade union members may vote for such representatives and the councils can be organized only if one half of the employees belong to a union that has ratified the agreement. These councils do concern themselves with improving production though they have no authority to make decisions. The councils also discuss such problems as hygiene, safety, occupational training. Wages and hours, however, come under the jurisdiction of the Trades Union Federation and the Employers Association. White collar workers are not included in this scheme, since they have a separate agreement with the Employers Association.

Rationalization is further advanced in Norway. First, there is the Central Cooperative Council which advises the government on all economic, financial and industrial matters. It is composed of two members from each industry and two from each trade union appointed by the government. The government pays the salaries of the director and secretariat while labor and management contribute part of the money. Tripartite industry-wide councils have been established by law. These, however, have met with employer opposition, based on fear of the unveiling of trade secrets. Works Committees were established by the agreement of December 5, 1945, between the Federation of Trades Unions and the Norwegian Employers Association. These joint production committees are composed of from three to five representatives of management and workers respectively and may be organized in all plants employing more than twenty persons. They must, however, be organized in all state-owned plants employing more than fifty persons. They concern themselves principally with means of increasing production, industrial hygiene and vocational training. Even though they have been in existence for such a short time, all political parties agree that they have proven successful. Their most concrete accomplishments thus far have been the decrease in absenteeism and the institution of the three-week paid vacation. The emloyers accept them and labor moral is noticeably higher since their inception.

LEILA SEIGEL

LATIN AMERICAN LETTER

Raoul Haya de la Torre

This is a Latin-American point of view. After a hundred years of Marx and Engels' *Communist Manifesto,* the judgment of the founders of scientific Socialism regarding world economics appears clearly confined by the European field of observation from which the industrial evolution of our populated planet was analyzed.

The modern capitalist system is not the result of an evolution born of our own soil in Latin America. The modern capitalist system began in Latin America when the system had reached its culminating point and overflowed from Europe, that is, with the beginning of the export of capital. It emigrated and inserted itself into the social life of Latin America which hitherto had existed under the domination of Spain and Portgual within a new type of mercantile and feudal system. But despite this system's existence, it has not succeeded in destroying the older native mode of life in certain large countries such as Mexico, and the Peru of the Incas which also included Equador, Bolivia, south of Colombia and north of Argentina. It places itself in juxtaposition or with the indiginous economy and establishes the paradox which exists to this day, *i.e.,* that of a double economy with two different speeds, the one operating at the accelerated pace of foreign finance capitalism and the other proceeding at its own slow tempo.

On the other hand, there is a notable fact which has continued to hold true: when European industrialization expands along geographic parallels its characteristics are different than when it travels towards the medidians. The capitalist system (in Marx's words: "Up to the present England is the classic ground") does not vary its characteristic fundamentals when it widens in the direction of Europe, North America, Russia or Japan. It remains industrial manufacturing capitalism. But when it emigrates to the Southern Hemisphere, it is chiefly industrialization in raw materials, agricultural products or semi-manufactured goods. This type of industrialization determines the creation of a different social type of working class distinct from the industrial proletariat of Europe.

That is why when Lenin wrote, "Imperialism, or the exportation of capitalism, to use Hobson's definition, is the last stage of capitalism," we were able to reply to him, based on our own historic experience, that it was the final stage in countries with advanced industrial development but the first in countries that were not developed economically.

There is another relevant characteristic aspect of the economic development of Latin America. Marx states: "The country that is more

developed industrially only shows to the less developed the image of their own future." This, also, is not absoltuely true when one is dealing with Latin America. And, in this it is also easy to discern a European conception of the phenomenon of universal capitalism, limited and modified by a static point of view. It is evident that even the United States is being essentially modified by the new space and the new epoch in which it is developing. This time-space relationship is fundamental today when the scientific truths regarding both of these concepts have been profoundly altered—as have those of matter and movement. Marx like all of the philosophers of his period based himself on the Newtonian theory of time and space as absolute, as did Kant, Fichte and Hegel. Consequently, the Marxian conception of historic evolution could but go in the same direction, and consequently in it the most advanced can only show the least advanced the image of their own future. But this is not true with regard to Latin America. Latin-American industrialization, as well as that in all countries in the Southern Hemisphere, has its own particular characteristics.

These contradictions indicate that orthodox Marxist ideology is now in its decline, and the explanation for this lies in Marx's own philosophy. His dialectic is based on "the negation of the negation" and the constant passing of all things, on the historic fate of all that has been negated and overcome. It is also possible to believe that Marxism itself is subject to this same process of negation. The first man to discover that man died, died himself. But it is necessary to accept, using Marxist dialectics as a basis, that its own negation must be founded on scientific truths for in a like manner Marxist dialectics based itself on the negation of Hegelian dialectics. And these new foundations cannot but be the new scientific concepts of matter, movement, space and time. The world today is passing through a profound scientific revolution which can only be compared to that which began with Copernicus and ended with Newton. The basic laws of the universe and of physics have been radically changed. The fundamental concepts on which the great mass of European philosophic thought were erected are today being revised. The bases for the philosophy of history are also being revised. History is the development of humanity in space and time. Nevertheless, space and time are not today absolute and universal. There are as many space-time relationships as there are physical phenomena. Could there not also be as many time-space relationships as there are historical processes?

In Latin America it is possible to travel through the different stages of the world's social and economic evolution. From Lima or Rio de Janeiro, both modern capitalist-type cities, we continue through feudal and pre-feudal forms of work and social structures until we reach the existence of the primitive savages of the Amazon. From Buenos Aires, with its skyscrapers and subways, we can also travel towards the Chaco and also pass through all the steps in the social history of economic production until we reach the point which in the universal chronology of history corresponds to a pre-historic period. And, nevertheless, all these

live under the same formula of the capitalist system. In the same manner, they all live in the time-space period of 1948 although their "historic time" in evolution corresponds to many centuries ago. . . .

The answer to these contradictions must lie in a new philosophy of history. From Marx, there remains certain universal principles of economy but his laws of history have not held true. Supply and demand is also a universal law. It governs in commerce with savages. A good piece of native gold can be exchanged for a mirror. But this same law is different when it is applied in Buenos Aires, New York and London. Engels said correctly: "He who would subordinate Tierra del Fuego and England to the same economic laws will only produce similarities of the most vulgar nature." Engels also wrote in the Editor's preface to the first English translation of *Das Kapital*: "England is the only country where the inevitable social revolution might be effected entirely by peaceful and legal means." One might ask: Why only in England? Could it not also occur in other countries not studied by Marx?

In his study on Feurbach, Engels also wrote that Hegel's greatest discovery was that there are no eternal truths nor perfect and immoral theories in the human process. These procedures show us that even genial conceptions like those of Marx can and do grow old.

BOOKS

"IF STALIN ONLY KNEW . . ."

Together with many thousands of Polish refugees fleeing from the invading German armies, the author of this book,* a Socialist lawyer from Warsaw, suddenly found himself in September, 1939, in territory occupied by the Red Army.

If any of these refugees thought at the time that a socialist outlook and uncomprising enmity to Nazism and fascism would endear them to the authorities of "socialist" Russia, they were soon undeceived. A pro-"Western" orientation, hallmark of the Central European liberal and progressive, suddenly acquired a most damaging connotation; it became synonymous with bourgeois reaction, espionage, and sabotage. Thus it hapened that many who had considered themselves "leftists" all their lives, and therefore in a broad sense natural allies rather than enemies of the Soviet Union, were treated by the Soviets with the utmost distrust and hostility. The tragedies of the two Jewish Socialist leaders, Victor Alter and Henryk Erlich, who were executed by the Soviets on trumped-up charges, are still unforgotten. Part of the Left had to learn the hard way that its presumption of an all-Left solidarity, including the Soviets, was pure myth.

I

The author, half-brother of Victor Alter, was politically less prominent than the latter; hence the Soviets treated him with less rigor. Distrust him they did, and he was briefly arrested shortly after the fall of Poland; but he was released, and lived in precarious freedom until March, 1940, when he tried to cross the frontier into Lithuania. He was arrested by Soviet frontier guards, and this was the beginning of the extremely painful, and nearly fatal, experience related in this sincere, instructive, and harrowing book.

It will be noted that Mr. Gliksman was charged with no other crime than trying to cross the frontier illegally. For this administrative offence, he was kept in prison until September, 1940, when he was sentenced to five years in a "corrective labor camp." There is hardly any dobut that this would have amounted to a death sentence, had Mr. Gliksman been required to serve his full term; as it was, however, all Polish citizens detained in Soviet territory were released under the Sikorski-Stalin accord in August, 1941. Subsequently, under the same agreement, Mr. Gliksman was able to leave Russia. Thus, he is one of the very few people who have been inside Soviet prisons and labor camps and who are still in a position to "tell the West."

Mr. Gliksman nowhere attempts an appraisal of the Soviet system as a moral, juridical and social phenomenon. But the bare facts he relates provide a good basis for such an appraisal.

There is no doubt that most inmates of Soviet prisons and labor camps suffer atrociously. For the

* *Tell the West. By Jerzy Gliksman. New York: Gresham Press.* 357 *pp.* $3.75.

moral evaluation of the system, however, it is important to know how much of this is due to a deliberate impulse to make human beings suffer, and how much is the result of circumstances over which high authorities, at least, have no control. Mr. Gliksman himself goes out of his way to marshal evidence pointing in the second direction. Time and again, he quotes humane and reasonable prison regulations which are habitually disregarded, either because of material shortages, or because of the corruption reigning in the lower ranks of the penal administration. But the book also contains descriptions of cruel and degrading practices like the *obisk* (p. 37) and the *kartser* (p. 69) which could not exist without the knowledge and approval of the highest Soviet authorities.

Nor is this all. Some of the worst things Mr. Gliksman went through in his remand prison, such as the entirely incredible technique of "collective" sleeping he describes, were not decreed by the Soviet authorities; they were "simply" the result of fantastic overcrowding. But it seems to me that any penal administration has a direct moral responsibility for avoiding overcrowding of such proportions. Surely it would not have been impossible for the Soviet authorities (and in peacetime at that!) to send home people merely accused of trifling administrative offences. The fact that they insisted upon keeping all these people in jail for months on end, eighty to a room, reveals an indifference and moral callousness which is indistinguishable from outright sadism.

The book contains many case histories, not only of Polish refugees but also of Russians. It is an endless panorama of broken lives, annihilated existences. The reasons? A few patterns stand out. Mr. Gliksman's own case is pretty typical: a pro-"Western" progressive, suspect for this reason, tries to leave the country without official permission. Not that he is particularly welcome in Russia, or that the authorities attach any particular value to his presence; but he has disobeyed official regulations, and he must pay for it—to the tune of five years' hard labor. The harshness of the sentence is explained by the fact that trying to leave the country without permission is a political crime; apparently, it reflects unfavorably upon Russia that anyone should want to leave it; these unappreciative people must be taught better.

II

Other political "crimes" for which people were sentenced included various forms of "sabotage." A young Russian, Petya, for instance, worked in a factory; he pointed out a faultily installed machine to the director. Nothing was done about it; finally, when an accident occurred, Petya was accused as a "wrecker" (p. 129). Another Russian told the following tale:

"When the chief . . . began lauding my project . . . I knew that I was lost. I immediately realized that he would not tolerate anybody better than himself . . . (he) sang my praises, and a week later he turned me in for sabotage. . . ."

The extreme brutality of Soviet penal practices is sometimes defended by apologists with the argument that the regime must use intimidation to defend its existence against

internal enemies. But Petya was by no means an enemy of the regime; and the second "saboteur," for his part, was an idealist with a burning desire to improve production techniques. The old peasant who was sent to a labor camp for having told his grandchild that the serfs in Russia had been liberated under a Tsar was no enemy of the Soviet government, either. Gliksman quotes him as saying:

"Our NKVD commander was truly a swine. If the great Stalin had known about my case, the commander would have been here in the camp and I should still be at home with my family. But 'God is high in the heavens, and Moscow is far away,' as the saying goes. Stalin has no idea how cruelly and unjustly the plain people are treated by his officials."

And the author goes on to describe how the old peasant sang Stalin's praises, extolling his cleverness, his nobility, his power, the splendor in which he lives in the Kremlin.

III

When reading these and similar case histories, one has the impression that the Soviet penal system does not merely serve to protect the regime against its enemies; it is also an organic part of the social competition pattern under the Soviet dictatorship. The members of the *élite,* those who have already achieved success, are in a position to use the repressive apparatus in order to get rid of competitors; the NKVD, itself part of the *éite,* uses its powers to manufacture public enemies, thereby proving how greatly it is needed.

In civilized societies, the "criminals" are a marginal group of people who are unable to adjust themselves to the normal ways of society. This formula, however, does not describe the position and function of the inmates of labor camps in Soviet Russia. This group includes, in part, "marginal" individuals, *i.e.,* common criminals and real political opponents of the regime. Basically, however, the function of the camps does not consist in segregating the "marginal" individuals, but in turning out certain goods and services which in the Soviet economy cannot be produced at normal wage rates. Since one sector of the economy is set aside for the production of goods at starvation rates, part of the social competition consists in avoiding being assigned to this sector. The required number of people, however, always lose in this competition; the NKVD always provides the necessary number of offenders.

By now, it seems to me, the average Russian has developed sufficient safety mechanisms not to be caught off guard; he will hardly be as rash as to criticize Stalin or defend the West within hearing of a stranger. But there always will be jealous and malevolent supervisors and accidents in factories; there will also be the overwhelming temptation to make some extra gain by illicit trade. These will always provide the NKVD with the necessary contingent of workers to operate *its* sector of the national economy.

PAUL KECSKEMETI

BUCHENWALD

Under this title the Munich weekly Echo der Woche *for January 24, 1948, published the first detailed report on the concentration camp of Buchenwald under the Soviet regime. The article caused a sensation in Germany.*

Last October, writes reporter Heinz Rusalle, a communiqué appeared denying all rumors that Buchenwald was again a concentration camp, now under Soviet direction, and stating that Buchenwald's main camp contained nothing but a memorial to honor the victims of Nazi terror who died there, while only a small part of the camp housed a few SS-men, prominent Nazis and army officers. Just a few days ago, I read a letter which an SPD functionary who had been arrested in 1946, wrote to his brother: "We are 12,000 men here and our situation is hopeless. Almost every day new men are brought here, almost always people who belong to parties other than te SEP. None of these men has been sent after a regular trial. Last September, they even brought in an old Communist who had been in Buchenwald five years when it was still a Nazi camp. Though new transports arrive almost daily, the camp population doesn't increase since others are again sent away to an unknown destination. Early in 1947, 2,000 young people simply disappeared. We have only a few Nazis here; they are separated from the others and live under even worse conditions. We live in barracks made to house 50 people but which actually house 150. We sleep in shifts on the floor; in the beginning there were no blankets at all, now we have one each. We wear the clothes that we inherited from the 1933-1945 prisoners. We hardly ever get soap so we are exceedingly dirty. Our daily food ration consists of 500 grams of bread, some jam, "coffee," and a liter of thick soup. The guards, for the most part, are former German prisoners of war. Conditions in the camp for women are even worse off; these women hardly look like women at all any more. They wear trousers and their hair has been shorn like ours. Every night Russians visit their barracks.

Suicides are quite common; inmates simply walk into the prohibited zone and are shot down by the guards. Up to now nobody has been released, and I don't think that anybody will be if no miracle happens. I am desperate now! I no longer have a name. I am simply a figure with which one can do what one wants."

The wife of the man who wrote this letter was shot recently—she had come too near to some guards who watched over inmates working outside of the camp. The NKVD is everywhere around the camp, they are afraid of "spies" and arrest people who appear "suspicious."

The camp is cut off from the outside by three rows of barbed wire and a 3-meters-high wooden fence. The huge gate to the camp is adorned with the emblems of the

Soviet State. The facade of the offices of the commander is decorated with a huge portrait of Stalin. Nobody knows who the commander is; when he goes through the camp all the inmates have to disappear into the barracks. *The lesson of the Nuremberg trials of Nazi camp commanders has been well learned. . . .* Bloodhounds, which have been inherited from the Nazis, patrol the outer limits of the camp. Watchtowers with machine guns point at the camp.

When the reporter asked a farmer about the shots which were sometimes heard from inside the camp, he answered: *"They don't shoot into the air."* The peasant also stated that the two villages in the vicinity of the camp had about 1,000 inhabitants, and that no less than thirty-one had disappeared so far. Twelve of these were found shot dead in the woods, of the others, it was known that they had been arrested and interned. Nothing is known of the rest. *"The Russians,"* said the farmer, *"don't have any scruples. The number of internees must remain constant; if somebody disappears they simply arrest a man from the outside to make up for the lost man."* Another man told the reporter that his son had come too near the camp while gathering wood, and was shot dead on the spot. The same day a Russian officer visited the father to tell him that his son had been shot as a spy and had been buried there and then. He was further told that the officer would immediately proceed to cart away the greater part of his furniture in order to punish him for his son's "espionage"; The camp has been functioning since 1945, *i.e.*, soon after it had been "liberated."

SOVIET FANTASY IN GERMANY

Elie Gabey, writing in Sartre's Les Temps Modernes (Paris) *for January,* 1948, *provides an insight into the crude methods Russian and SED propagandists employ in order to defend the Soviet myth against world-wide knowledge of Soviet realities:*

At present, a Russian play called *Colonel Kuzmin* is being staged in Berlin. The Russian colonel is commander of a small German town near the American zone. He meets several American journalists who ask questions about Soviet democracy:

First journalist: You always speak of your democracy. If you, colonel, were to disagree with Stalin, could you express yourself openly in the Soviet press?

Kuzmin: I don't think so.

Second journalist: You see!

First journalist: Why?

Kuzmin: Because no newspaper would dare publish something like that.

First journalist: For what reason?

Kuzmin: Because the very same day the population would demolish the editorial office of the paper that would dare print that. . . .

ON POLITICAL CULTURE

The Paris leftist Catholic review Esprit *for January,* 1948, *reprints the "Open Letter," Elio Vittorni, member of the Italian Communist Party, and one of the most promi-*

nent writers of the younger generation in Italy, recently addressed to Togliatti in the pages of the magazine Il Politecnico (*Milan*) *which he edits. The letter is of considerable interest, expressing as it does the revolt of a "party intellectual" against the rigid dictates of the Central Committee. Vittorini showed considerable courage in publishing it. Unfortunately, only a synopsis of some of Vittorini's main arguments can be reprinted here*:

I did not join the Party, says Mr Vittorini, for ideological reasons. I had not then read a line of Marx. I did not adhere to a philosophy when I joined the Party. I joined the struggle and I joined men. After the liberation of Italy, I began to read Marxist texts, but I am still not a Marxist, though I have immensely profited from the cultural sources which Marx led me to discover. Some people will say: "Why then, do you speak up at all? Why don't you just continue learning?" They seem to think that one can speak only if one "possesses the truth." But the right to speak does not derive from the possession of truth, but rather from the incessant quest for it. If "possession of the truth" should become the criterion. culture would again become clerical and only preachers and rhetoricians would have a right to speak. Marx knew that his was a method of research and not of possession.

I do not deny that culture and politics are closely linked, but they are still distinct activities. And when one of them is reduced to the inability of developing its own dynamics, when it is forced to turn toward the other and to follow it onto the terrain of the other as an auxiliary, then something essential has doubtlessly been lost. A culture which cannot freely develop and cannot freely question, which moves instead toward political influence, does not accomplish its own task in order to accomplish another. . . . In the long run only an autonomous culture can enrich politics; political culture, which no longer enjoys its essential faculty, the asking of questions, cannot enrich politics qualitatively and can help action only in a mechanical and subordinate manner. If all culture becomes political and is thus checked in its advance, there will be no more quest for new answers. *Good night then!*

I refuse to accept the total politicalization of culture (with its neomedieval consequences), and I demand the autonomy of culture which solely allows it to develop through trial and error and to accomplish its non-political task. Only in a most dramatic moment of a revolution do politics coincide with the interests of culture to such a degree that then, and only then, all distinction between the two is wiped out.

A society (be it classless) in which the spirit of questioning has died, would be a society where no new Marx, no new philosopher, no new poet would have the right to live. Such a society would be the reverse of that of which Marx dreamed, *i.e.*, a society in which men can fully develop. Culture must above all avoid the danger of being a system translated into political terms. The first stage on the march toward a classless society must be the freedom of man!

I never have said that political men shouldn't interfere in cultural

affairs. I have simply stated that they shouldn't apply political criteria when they intervene, that they shouldn't have p o l i t i c a l aims, shouldn't use p o l i t i c a l means, shouldn't try to use pressure and intimidation. The use of political lies means the use of force, and this must end in obscurantism. One should never try to act *on* culture, one must act *within* culture. Otherwise obscurantism will produce dry rot, deadliness, and, finally, complete stagnation.

Let's look at America. There was a time when the best writers, the best poets and thinkers were pro-Communist. Hemingway, Caldwell, Steinbeck, Dos Passos, Richard Wright, James T. Farrell, have now left, and there remain people who are not exactly of the first order, such as Howard Fast and Albert Maltz. And yet those who have left us have not become "supporters of reaction." Some have committed political errors, but the basic impact of their works remains of revolutionary importance, and they must be judged according to their cultural competence and not their more or less accidental political incompetence. Is it really sufficient for a writer to "speak badly of Garibaldi" to be treated as a counter-revolutionary?

The spiritual nourishment that Marxism contains attracts too many petty intellectuals who live on it and live by it above their means. Too many petty intellectuals who, unable to live on their own substance, make of Marxism a sort of code of literature and politics, and ask only for conformist adherence unburdened by any problem. Just look at the superficial and sectarian article which *The New Masses* recently wrote against John Dewey, the greatest progressive thinker on the other side of the Atlantic.

The line that separates progress from reaction in the cultural domain does not exactly coincide with the line that separates them in politics. Marxism, during Marx's time, knew how to appreciate the progressive content of the greatest writers of its period—Heine, Hoelderlin, Dickens, Balzac—without asking whether they belonged to the left or the right. Today we ignore Kafka and even refuse seriously to consider the work of Hemingway. A writer is not a revolutionist because he blows the clarion of the revolution. Those who translate political problems into *bel canto* are not the true revolutionists.

L'art pour l'art is not always reactionary. During the Victorian age and during the Second Empire, it was the battle-cry of those who demanded freedom to express the new exigencies of life. Swineburne, Flaubert, Baudelaire, Hardy, and even Oscar Wilde were progressive in this sense since they attacked conformism. That writer is revolutionary who succeeds in posing in his work revolutionary exigencies other than those of politics, exigencies which are interior, secret, hidden in the individual. Only such a writer can discover in man what he as a writer should discover, and what he as a revolutionary writer should express.

To reject or to ignore the best writers of our age who have tried to express the present crisis, means to reject all the literature that is pregnant with the problems born out of the crisis of contemporary Western society. The revolutionary

writer who is a member of our party *should reject the esthetic tendencies of the USSR,* not only because they are the product of a particular country, namely Russia, and because it isn't certain that Italian or French socialist construction would pose these problems in the same way; he should reject them simply because of the dangers which they contain.

"EUROPE, AMERICA, OCCIDENT?"

Andre Siegfried, the distinguished French sociologist and political scientist, contributes a few exceedingly perceptive pages under the above title to the January, 1948, *issue of the Parisian monthly* La Revue Hommes et Mondes. *Even though some of it may appear stereotyped to the American reader, it is important because the image Mr. Seigfried tries to draw here corresponds to a large degree to similar conceptions widely held among many, if not most, European intellectuals.*

In the past, writes Mr. Siegfried, when we tried to evaluate our civilization, we would never have had the idea of associating it with any continent but Europe. . . we always spoke of European civilization. But now we have slowly become accustomed, by a sort of hardly perceptible shift, to speak of Western civilization. We are no longer so certain that the old continent as a whole belongs to this civilization; and we have learned that the United States has now become its most efficacious vanguard and perhaps its supreme guarantee. The center of gravity has changed, and one is tempted to transpose the famous verse and to say that "Rome is no longer Rome." But all this poses an immense problem. If the old European civilization, now becoming Occidental civilization, will in the future be based primarily on North America, will it then be able to maintain its traditional characteristics, will it remain itself?

European civilization is the result of a triple conception of the character of knowledge, of man, and of developed industrial technology. The conception of knowledge, we owe to the Greeks. Our conception of man as a thinking individual stems both from the Greeks and from the Christian traditions; it is this basically same trend of thought which came to full fruition in the French and American revolutions; finally, technical invention has put in the hands of the European an instrument of such power that he has been able to transform the face of the earth and to inaugurate a truly new age. The spirt of Europe is a critical spirit. individualist and non-confromist, always given to experimentation, to questioning, and to the rejection of previously acquired results. The European refuses to submit to fatalism and believes in the possibility of improving the human condition. All the myths of the European tradition show us men capturing—against the will of the gods—either knowledge or the power which is its indispensable condition. This spirit of revolt is always a spirit of progress.

Furthermore, the old world represents a civilization in which the memory of the past has great weight. Auguste Comte's dictum that humanity consists of the dead much more than of the living, is certainly true for Europe. By knowledge of

the past, Europe links herself without hiatus to the oldest human societies: she is a successor. But this overripe maturity has not only advantages. The maturity of Europe has at last approached old age through the decline in natural resources: there are today more men on a too narrow territory than there are still unexploited natural riches.

What a difference if we compare this picture to the new world which nevertheless belongs to our Occidental civilization. The American is not tied to historical continuities, he wants to create new things, has contempt for those who stop on the way, who pause in their efforts. "History is bunk," said Ford. Wickham Steed tells of the Californians whom he met in a train: their oldest historical memory was the McKinley tariff. . . . *America sails in shallow waters on the ocean of time.* But this youth makes for its strength. America is an age . . . the age of youth, rather than a continent. This explains America's confidence and optimism.

The essential elements of the European spirit developed before the machine age. The critical temper of Greece, the Socratic and Christian image of the individual are all traits which in Europe matured before the machine. But European civilization, propelled by the power of the machine, has conquered the other continents and her present crisis stems precisely from this extension.

Berdyaiev may have been unduly pessimistic when he wrote: "The mechanization of life breaks the jubilation of the renaissance and makes a free expansion of life impossible," but it remains true that we are faced with the harrowing problem of how to save man from the excessive power that he has conquered and that threatens to enslave him. The maxim that man is the measure of all things doesn't make any sense in the Russian steppe or the American prairie. These are not the surroundings in which the Greek spirit was born. We may therefore ask ourselves whether Occidental civilization may not now incline toward the massive, the colossal, the super-organization—to the detriment of individualism, measured by development and diversity. This seems to be a function of geography as well as of modes of production. We have entered the "administrative age," an age in which technology becomes less important than organization, an age in which the anarchic individual is replaced by mass-man; in this age it is no longer possible to act without closing ranks.

It seems that historically, geographically, economically, the new key countries of Occidental civilization resemble but little the old world. The "de-Europeanization" of Occidental civilization might well be accompanied by a change in its character. We are perturbed by America's overconfidence in mass production, in a hierarchy of values which gives an undue emphasis to quantity. And also of a certain excessive growth of the spirit of organization and of conformism. But there are also other aspects of American civilization which justify our belief that America may become the last refuge of the Western spirit. A new chapter in the history of the West was opened by the industrial revolution. Another chapter has be-

gun with the Second World War. Let us hope that the unity of the book of the West can nevertheless be maintained.

CONFERENCE AT SCARBOROUGH

In its May 22 issue, the British Economist *discusses the important Labor Party Conference at Scarborough. The* Economist's comment follows:

Mr. Herbert Morrison has always been the longest-sighted of the leaders of the Labor Party. This week he has been striving at Scarborough to bring the Party Conference to a sense of realities. He has told the Party such hard truths as that their margin of votes is slender, that they will have the fight of their lives to win the General Election, that they must draw up their program to please public opinion rather than to satisfy their own desires and that there is more need to make the existing schemes of nationalization work well than to initiate new ones. To judge by reports from Scarborough, the Lord President had only moderate success with this line of argument. He was not booed, but the cheers were respectful rather than enthusiastic. Perhaps nothing else could be expected. Party conferences are peculiar occasions. The passport to membership is to be loyal party worker. In such an atmosphere complacency is almost compulsory and any moderation of attachment to the sacred principles of the party is almost equivalent to treason. The delegates are very conscious that they are the party, and from this it is only a step to believing that they are the people who put it into power. It is difficult in such an atmosphere to remember that elections, like values, are determined at the margin and that an unbroken record of party loyalty, though it may make a man important at Scarborough, makes him utterly unimportant at the polls. It is the non-member, the disloyalist, the wavering sceptic, who puts parties into power or removes them from office. The people who really matter to the Labor Party were not represented at Scarborough —except perhaps by Mr. Morrison.

Observers report that this is a dull conference. The first exhilaration of power has passed and the excitement of the election are still too far off. The truth is that the Labor Government, in an electoral sense, is not doing too badly and not doing too well either. It has lost no by-elections—but the figures of votes cast, as well as the public opinion polls, suggest that it has lost the essential margin. The Opposition is incoherent; but the Right has often won elections on incoherence. If there were an election this month, it would be touch and go which side would win. Everything, therefore, depends on which way the trend goes in the two years that probably lie ahead before the election. It is Mr. Morrison's instinct to do as little as possible that is new or startling in those two years because he believes that the Labor Government has already done too much, rather than too little, for the taste of the crucial, marginal voter. And there can be little doubt that Mr. Morrison's instinct is correct.

There have been some notable converts within the Labor Party of recent months to this view that an effort must be made to please, or at

least not to frighten, the unattached middle-class voter who put Labor in in 1945. The country has even been treated to the strange spectacle of the organ of the Socialist intellectuals advocating such things as the restoration of incentives in industry, the removal of controls and the restoration to "the secondary industries" of "the greatest possible freedom"—all this in order to "regain the support of some at least of the professional and technical classes which have been alienated since 1945." This is refreshing (if also, from its source, more than a little amusing). But it is not yet by any means the view of the Party. That this is so is shown most clearly by the elections to the Party Executive at Scarborough. Of the candidates elected (other than the trade union nominees), the first three in order of votes received were Mr. Aneurin Bevan, Mr. Dalton and Mr. Shinwell. Mr. Morrison fell from third place to fourth, and the moderate Mr. Noel Baker lost his place to Mr. Michael Foot, the Junius of the revolutionaires. These results do not give the impression that the Party is slowing from the gallop of its first three years to a sedate walk. They rather suggest that it has the bit between the teeth.

The crux of these differences of view lies in the blessed word nationalization. It is not merely the simple issue of whether there shall be more or less of it—though that is indeed a matter for dispute, with Mr. Morrison at the one extreme trying to limit the program to steel, and wishing he could avoid even that, to Mr. Mikardo at the other extreme, who recently told a second batch of industries that he'd got them on his list, or to Mr. Dalton who characteristically suggested this week that nationalization should be the fate of any industry that did not behave itself in the matter of dividend limitation. These are more or less mechanical issues. What is of much greater importance is the fact, which has now become painfully clear, that the Labor Party is very far from being of one mind about what the purpose of its nationalization schemes should be.

The orthodox view of nationalization—what can, in terms of present personalities, be called the Morrison-Cripps view—is that it is a means of securing a much more efficient, scientifically planned, productive organization of industry. The justification for schemes of nationalization, says the latest statement of this view, "is that they are essential for a planned and expanding economy which stimulates true initiative and enterprise." Socialist planning should give "an assurance that, while serving the needs of society, it gives a chance for initiative, scientific research and modern management techniques." These and similar arguments have been deployed for years on thousands of platforms and in thousands of books and pamphlets. They were the arguments with which the nationalization Bills were communicated to Parliament. They were quite certainly the arguments that secured for the Labor Party and its program enough of the floating vote to put it into office.

In no case was this more true than of coal. A clear majority of the public was convinced, first, that there was an urgent need for a drastic reorganization of the coal mines, secondly, that this would not

happen under private ownership, and thirdly, that nationalization opened up the way to greater efficiency. If the Coal Act had been submitted to a plebiscite, it would have been given a large majority, and for these reasons. And this is why the resignation of Sir Charles Reid from the National Coal Board is a political event of the first importance. As always when a long series of disagreements between a man and his colleagues finally reaches breaking point, the particular causes of the rupture are obscure and the outsider should hesitate to pronounce judgment upon them. But Sir Charles Reid has for three years been of great symbolic importance. The Reid Report, with its emphasis on the need for, and the possibility of, radical technical reorganization, was a beacon of hope when it was pubished three years ago. "At last there is a real report on coal" were the opening words of *The Economist's* leader, and it is safe to say that the decisive element in the public support for the nationalization of the mines rested on the belief that it was designed to implement the Reid Report. For coal, there existed (as there never has existed for the other nationalization schemes) an authoritative program which could be carried out with public ownership and could not be done without it.

Now Sir Charles Reid has resigned and once again the event has a symbolism that is greater than its actual warrants. The occasion of the break appears to have been matters of the Board's organization. But it looks as if the real cause was the resistance of the union to the necessary measures of technical reorganization — which everybody knew would be unpleasant — and the unwillingness of the Board to stick to its principles. This interpretation is certainly supported by the recent crop of clear indications that a very large and influential section of the Labor Party never accepted the "efficient" view of the purposes of nationalization. When Mr. Shinwell, in his much-misunderstood speech of a fortnight ago, expressed dissatisfaction with the working of coal nationalization, he did not mean that the campaign for greater efficiency had been too slow in getting off the mark; he meant almost the exact contrary, that the Board, in the pursuit of technical efficiency, had paid too little attention to the wishes of the miners. Since then, other voices have joined in. Mr. Dalton has invited the cotton operatives to write their own ticket. Mr. Hornore has made it clear that the miners expect to get for themselves the greater part of any benefit that may accrue from the mechanization of the mines. And on Wednesday Mr. Will Lawther, the President of the Mineworkers Union, summed the whole matter up with admirable clarity.

> "We have a very sincere objection to people who are as far away from the pits as posssible . . . telling us how they should be run. We tell you, not you tell us."

It would be difficult to exaggerate the importance of this issue. There are clearly two wholly different conceptions of the purpose for which industries are brought under public ownership, and both conceptions can be found within the Labor Party itself.

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